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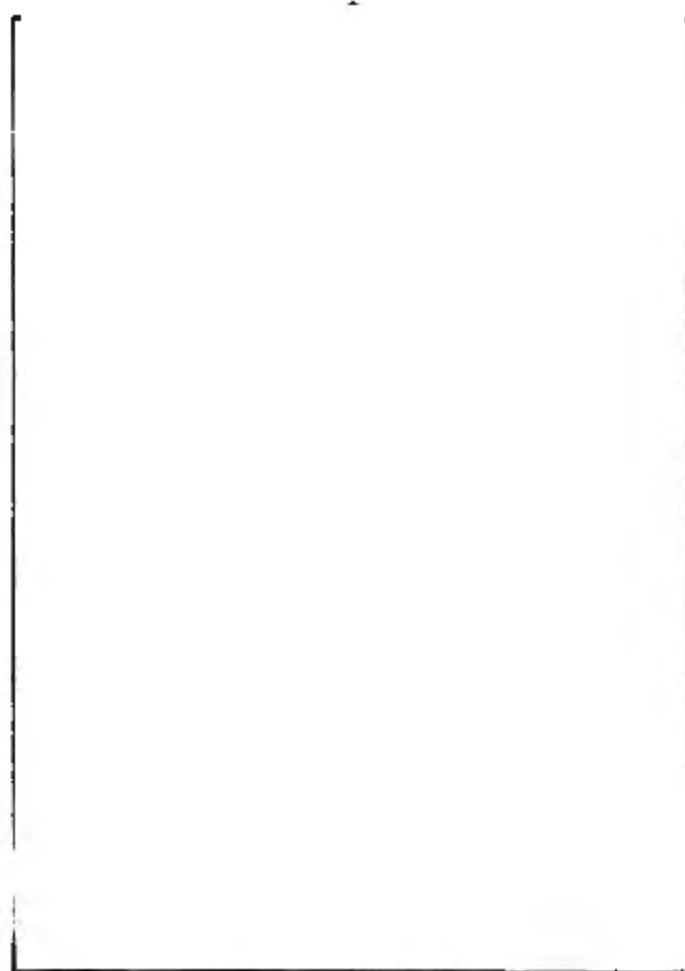
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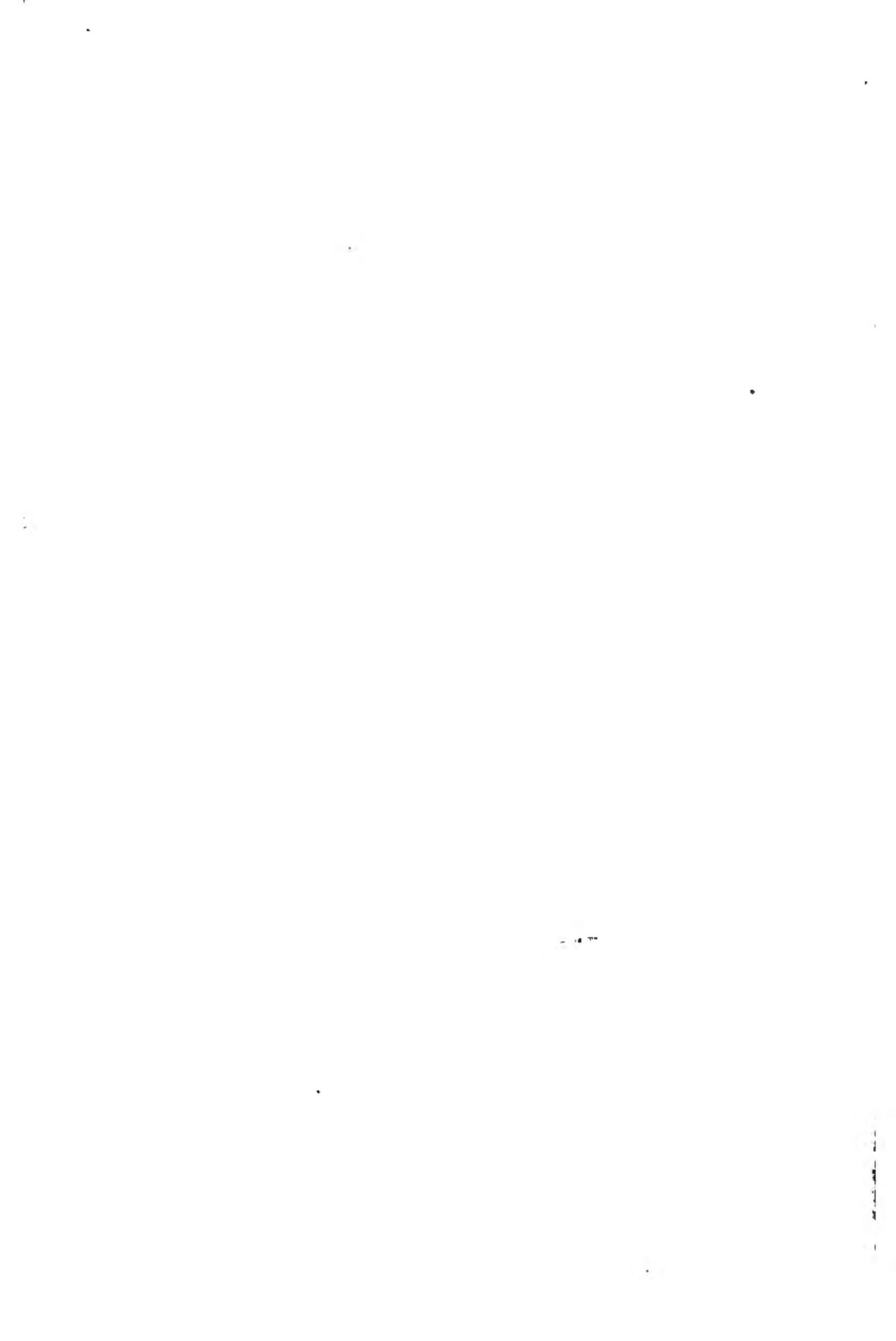












*Lav. 2, Var. 1a (Howell) "Mrs. Jefferson Davis"*

# JEFFERSON DAVIS

PRÉSIDENT OF THE CONFÉDÉRATE STATES  
OF AMÉRIQUE

## A Memoir

BY

HER WIFE

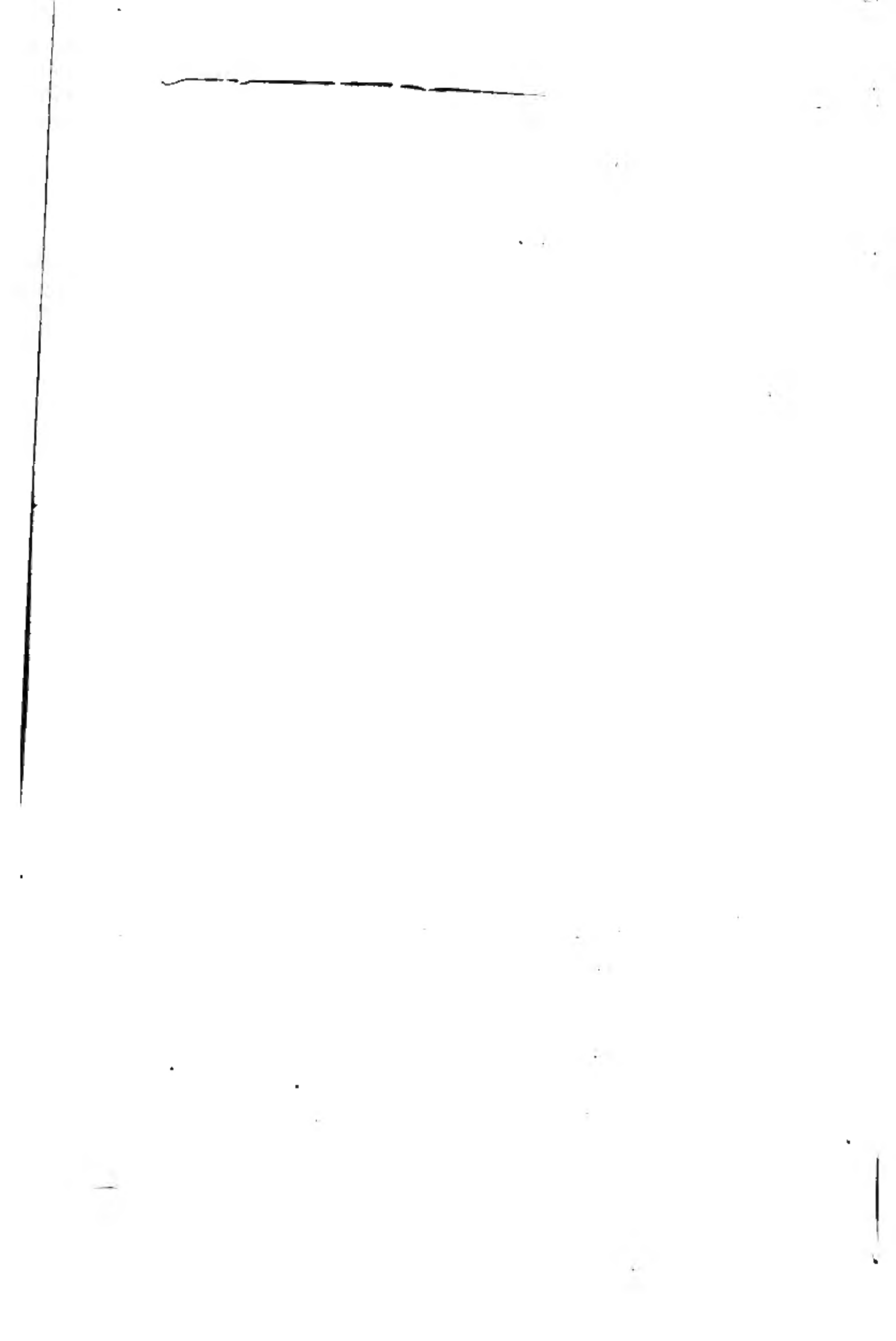
NEW YORK

VOL. I.

NEW YORK

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18 92 EAST 18TH STREET



*Louis, Maria (Howell) (Mrs. Jefferson Davis)*

# JEFFERSON DAVIS

38701

EX-PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES  
OF AMERICA

## A Memoir

BY

HIS WIFE

*IN TWO VOLUMES*

VOL. I

NEW YORK  
BELFORD COMPANY, PUBLISHERS  
18-22 EAST 18TH STREET

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**VARINA JEFFERSON DAVIS,**  
**1890.**



**Dedication.**

TO THE SOLDIERS OF THE CONFEDERACY,  
WHO CHEERED AND SUSTAINED  
JEFFERSON DAVIS  
IN THE DARKEST HOUR  
BY THEIR SPLENDID GALLANTRY,  
AND NEVER WITHDREW THEIR CONFIDENCE FROM HIM  
WHEN DEFEAT SETTLED ON OUR CAUSE,  
THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED  
BY HIS WIFE.



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BIRTHPLACE OF JEFFERSON DAVIS

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# JEFFERSON DAVIS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### ANCESTRY AND BOYHOOD.

JEFFERSON DAVIS was born in 1808. He died in 1889. During the intervening period of over fourscore years, by his stainless personal character ; by his unflagging and unselfish devotion to the interests of the South ; by his unsurpassed ability as an exponent and champion of her rights and principles, as well as by his distinguished public services in peace and war, and his high official station, he was universally regarded, both at home and abroad, as pre-eminently the representative of a great era, a great cause, and a great people.

The era is closed, the cause sleeps, but the people survive, and revere the memory, and mourn him dead, whom, living, they delighted to honor. It is for them that I write this memoir and vindication of his political action. In vindicating him I also vindicate them ; for he spent

his long life in their service, and was rewarded with their love and confidence from his cradle to his grave.

In the fulfilment of this sacred task I shall endeavor to be guided by the spirit that inspired him during his whole life—a spirit of unswerving devotion to truth and duty, of unyielding antagonism against all assailants of justice, without regard to their prejudices or their numbers, but mindful of the fact that every opponent, even to the death, is not necessarily an enemy, and that sincerity of belief is entitled to respectful consideration even when found arrayed against us. I shall endeavor to do exact and equal justice to the antagonists of the South, as well as to her leaders; “naught to extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.” If I fail, it will be because my love for the Southern people, and their lost cause and leader, may unconsciously influence my judgment of the men and beliefs that were arrayed in deadly conflict during the war between the States.

As to the plan of the work, I shall endeavor, as far as possible, to make the book an autobiography—to tell the story of my husband’s life in his own words; to complete the task he left unfinished. For, during the last year of his life, after having spent the summer in preparing “A Short History of the Confed-

erate States," he yielded to the repeated requests, both of his personal friends and publishers, to write an autobiography.

Shortly before his last journey to Briarfield he dictated to a friend, as an introductory chapter, this account of his ancestry and early boyhood. He was too weak to sit up long at a time, and lay in bed while his friend and I sat by and listened. No verbal or other change has been made in the dictation, which Mr. Davis did not read over:

"Three brothers came to America from Wales in the early part of the eighteenth century. They settled at Philadelphia.

"The youngest of the brothers, Evan Davis, removed to Georgia, then a colony of Great Britain. He was the grandfather of Jefferson Davis. He married a widow, whose family name was Emory. By her he had one son, Samuel Davis, the father of Jefferson Davis.

"When Samuel Davis was about sixteen years of age his widowed mother sent him with supplies to his two half-brothers, Daniel and Isaac Williams, then serving in the army of the Revolution. Samuel, after finding his brothers were in active service, decided to join them, and thus remained in the military service of Georgia and South Carolina until the close of the war. After several years of

service he gained sufficient experience and confidence to raise a company of infantry in Georgia. He went with them to join the revolutionary patriots, then besieged at Savannah.

“ At the close of the war he returned to his home. In the meantime his mother had died, and the movable property had been scattered. The place was a wreck. It was a home no more ; so he settled near Augusta. His early education had qualified him for the position of county clerk, and the people, who had known him from boyhood, gave him that office.

“ There was only one political party in those days — the Whigs. The Tories had been beaten or driven away. During his service in South Carolina he had met my mother, and after the war they were married. Her maiden name was Jane Cook. She was of Scotch-Irish descent, and was noted for her beauty and sprightliness of mind. She had a graceful poetic mind, which, with much of her personal beauty, she retained to extreme old age. My father, also, was unusually handsome, and the accomplished horseman his early life among the ‘ mounted men ’ of Georgia naturally made him. He was a man of wonderful physical activity.”

At this point of the narrative my husband was interrupted by a question, which he an-

swered by relating this anecdote about his father:

“The last time I saw my father he was sixty-four years of age. He was about to mount a tall and restless horse, so that it was difficult for him to put his foot in the stirrup. Suddenly he vaulted from the ground into the saddle without any assistance. He was usually of a grave and stoical character, and of such sound judgment that his opinions were a law to his children, and quoted by them long after he had gone to his final rest, and when they were growing old.”

Mr. Davis then continued his dictation:

“My parents lived near Augusta, Ga., where they had a farm, on which they resided until after the birth of several children, when they moved to what was then known as the Green River country, in the southwestern part of Kentucky. There my father engaged in tobacco-planting and raising blooded horses, of which he had some of the finest in the country.

“I was born on the 3d of June, 1808, in what was then Christian County. The spot is now in Todd County, and upon the exact site of my birthplace has since been built the Baptist church of Fairview.\*

---

\* In 1886 Mr. Davis attended and made a speech at the presentation of his birthplace to the trustees of the Baptist congregation.

“During my infancy my father removed to Bayou Têche, in Louisiana ; but, as his children suffered from acclimatization, he sought a higher and healthier district. He found a place that suited him about a mile east of Woodville, in Wilkinson County, Miss. He removed his family there, and there my memories begin.

“My father’s family consisted of ten children, of whom I was the youngest. There were five sons and five daughters, and all of them arrived at maturity excepting one daughter. My elder brother, Joseph, remained in Kentucky when the rest of the family removed, and studied law at Hopkinsville in the office of Judge Wallace. He subsequently came to Mississippi, where he practised his profession for many years, and then became a cotton-planter, in Warren County, Miss. He was successful both as a planter and a lawyer, and, at the beginning of the war between the States, possessed a very large fortune.

“Three of my brothers bore arms in the War of 1812, and the fourth was prevented

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All the surviving friends and neighbors of his father and of his own boyhood were present, and received Mr. Davis with the tenderest affection. It was my husband’s last visit to his birthplace, and gave him much pleasure. The house was taken down, moved, and re-erected as a parsonage on a lot adjacent to the new church.



from being in the army by an event so characteristic of the times, yet so unusual elsewhere, that it may be deemed worthy of note. When it was reported that the British were advancing to the attack of New Orleans, the men of Wilkinson County, who were then at home, commenced volunteering so rapidly that it was deemed necessary to put a check upon it, so as to retain a sufficient number at home for police purposes. For this purpose a county court, consisting of a justice and quorum, ordered a draft for a certain number of men to stay at home. This draft stopped my brother, who was about to start for New Orleans—making him the exception of my father's adult sons who were not engaged in the defence of the country during the War of 1812.

“The part of the county in which my father resided was at that time sparsely settled. Wilkinson County is the southwestern county of the State. Its western boundary is the Mississippi River. The land near the river, although very hilly, was quite rich. Toward the east it fell off into easy ridges, the soil became thin, and the eastern boundary was a ‘pine country.’ My father's residence was at the boundary line between the two kinds of soil. The population of the county, in the western portion of it, was generally composed

of Kentuckians, Virginians, Tennesseans, and the like; while the eastern part of it was chiefly settled by South Carolinians and Georgians, who were generally said to be unable to live without 'lightwood' \*—which is fat pine. The schools were kept in log-cabins, and it was many years before we had a 'County Academy.'

"Mississippi was a part of the territory ceded by Georgia to the United States. Its early history was marked by conflicts with the Spanish authorities, who had held possession, and who had a fort and garrison in Natchez.

"During the administration of President Adams a military force was sent down to take possession of the country. It was commanded by General Wilkinson, for whom the county in which we lived was named. He built a fort overlooking the Mississippi, and named it, in honor of the President, Fort Adams. There is still a village and river-landing by that name.

"My first tuition was in the usual log-cabin school-house; † though in the summer,

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\* The necessity for "fat pine" is not understood now that lucifer matches are in such general use. It is hard to recall when they were invented, but I remember when a flint and a piece of punk were the precarious means of "striking a light," and when the kitchen fire was of nearly as great importance as the sacred flame of India, and kept up religiously by the cook.

† At this time Jefferson and his little sister Pollie used to take a

when I was seven years old, I was sent on horseback through what was then called 'The Wilderness'—by the country of the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations—to Kentucky, and was placed in a Catholic institution then known as St. Thomas, in Washington County, near the town of Springfield.

"In that day (1815) there were no steam-boats, nor were there stage-coaches traversing the country. The river trade was conducted on flat- and keel-boats. The last-named only could be taken up the river. Commerce between the Western States and the Lower Mississippi was confined to water-routes. The usual mode of travel was on horseback or afoot. Many persons who had gone down the river in flat-boats walked back through the wilderness to Kentucky, Ohio,

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basket of luncheon and walk to school. She was two years older than he, but he thought he must take care of her. There used to be a peripatetic chair-mender who carried home his work in stacks on his head. He often got so drunk as to stagger aimlessly about, and at these times was quarrelsome, not to say dangerous ; but, at all events, he was an object of terror to the children. One day they were in the thickest and loneliest of the woods on their way to school, and they saw him, as they supposed, with his load poised high above him, reeling along in the road, coming directly toward them. The five-year-old hero took his sister's hand and said, "We will not run ;" so they stood terrified, but waiting the old drunkard. Instead of the legs of chairs it was the antlers of a splendid buck, which walked up quite near to these babes in the wood, looked at them for some minutes, and turned off. They stood their ground ; but it was a wild beast to them.

and elsewhere. We passed many of these, daily, on the road.

“ There were, at that time, places known as Stands, where the sick and weary ofttimes remained for relief, and many of these weary ones never went away. These Stands were log-cabins, three of them occupied by white men who had intermarried with the Indians. The first, in the Choctaw nation, was named Folsom; then came the Leflores, known as the first and second French camps. The fourth was that of a half-breed Chickasaw, at the crossing of the Tennessee River. When the traveller could not reach the house at which he had intended to stop, he found it entirely safe to sleep, wrapped in blankets, in the open air. It was the boast of the Choctaws that they had never shed the blood of a white man, and, as a proof of their friendship, they furnished a considerable contingent to the war against the Creek Indians, who were allies of the British.

“ The party with which I was sent to Kentucky consisted of Major Hinds (who had command of the famous battalion of Mississippi dragoons at the battle of New Orleans), his wife, his sister-in-law, a niece, a maid-servant, and his son Howell, who was near my own age, and, like myself, mounted on a pony. A servant had a sumpter mule with some

supplies, besides bed and blankets for camping out. The journey to Kentucky occupied several weeks.

“ When we reached Nashville we went to the Hermitage. Major Hinds wished to visit his friend and companion-in-arms, General Jackson. The whole party was so kindly received that we remained there for several weeks. During that period I had the opportunity a boy has to observe a great man—a stand-point of no small advantage—and I have always remembered with warm affection the kind and tender wife who then presided over his house.

“ General Jackson’s house at that time was a roomy log-house. In front of it was a grove of fine forest trees, and behind it were his cotton and grain fields. I have never forgotten the unaffected and well-bred courtesy which caused him to be remarked by court-trained diplomats, when President of the United States, by reason of his very impressive bearing and manner.

“ Notwithstanding the many reports that have been made of his profanity, I remember that he always said grace at his table, and I never heard him utter an oath. In the same connection, although he encouraged his adopted son, A. Jackson, Jr., Howell Hinds, and myself in all contests of activity, pony-

riding included, he would not allow us to wrestle; for, he said, to allow hands to be put on one another might lead to a fight. He was always very gentle and considerate.

“Mrs. Jackson’s education, like that of many excellent women of her day, was deficient; but in all the hospitable and womanly functions of wife and hostess she certainly was excelled by none. A child is a keen observer of the characteristics of those under whom he is placed, and I found Mrs. Jackson amiable, unselfish, and affectionate to her family and guests, and just and mild toward her servants. The undeserved slanders that had been launched against her for political purposes had served to render her husband more devoted to her, and her untimely death was unquestionably the heaviest grief of his life.

“Our stay with General Jackson was enlivened by the visits of his neighbors, and we left the Hermitage with great regret and pursued our journey. In me he inspired reverence and affection that has remained with me through my whole life.”

## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY EDUCATION.

“THE Kentucky Catholic School, called St. Thomas' College, when I was there, was connected with a church. The priests were Dominicans. They held a large property; productive fields, slaves, flour-mills, flocks, and herds. As an association they were rich. Individually, they were vowed to poverty and self-abnegation. They were diligent in the care, both spiritual and material, of their parishioners' wants.

“When I entered the school, a large majority of the boys belonged to the Roman Catholic Church. After a short time I was the only Protestant boy remaining, and also the smallest boy in the school. From whatever reason, the priests were particularly kind to me—Father Wallace, afterward Bishop of Nashville, treated me with the fondness of a near relative.

“As the charge has been frequently made that it is the practice of the priests in all their schools to endeavor to proselyte the boys confided to them, I may mention an incident

which is, in my case at least, a refutation. At that period of my life I knew, as a theologian, little of the true creed of Christianity, and under the influences which surrounded me I thought it would be well that I should become a Catholic, and went to the venerable head of the establishment, Father Wilson, whom I found in his room partaking of his frugal meal, and stated to him my wish. He received me kindly, handed me a biscuit and a bit of cheese, and told me that for the present I had better take some Catholic food.

“I was so small at this time that one of the good old priests had a little bed put in his room for me. There was an organized revolt among the boys one day, and this priest was their especial objective point. They persuaded me to promise to blow out the light which always burned in the room; so, after everything was quiet I blew it out; then the insurgents poured in cabbages, squashes, biscuits, potatoes, and all kinds of missiles. As soon as a light could be lit, search was made for the culprits, but they were all sound asleep and I was the only wakeful one. The priests interrogated me severely, but I declared that I did not know much and would not tell that. The one who had especial care of me then took me to a little room in the highest story of the monastery and strapped me down to



a kind of cot, which was arranged to facilitate the punishment of the boys; but the old man loved me dearly and hesitated before striking me a blow, the first I should have received since I had been with the monks. He pleaded with me, 'If you will tell me what you know, no matter how little, I will let you off.' 'Well,' said I, 'I know one thing, I know who blew out the light.' The priest eagerly promised to let me off for that piece of information and I then said, 'I blew it out.' Of course I was let off, but with a long talk which moved me to tears and prevented me from co-operating with the boys again in their schemes of mischief.

"I had been sent so young to school, and far from home, without my mother's knowledge or consent, that she became very impatient for my return. Neither then, nor in the many years of my life, have I ceased to cherish a tender memory of the loving care of that mother, in whom there was so much for me to admire and nothing to remember save good.

"Charles B. Green, a young Mississippian, who was studying law in Kentucky, had acted as my guardian when I was at school there, and he returned with me to Mississippi. We left Bardstown to go home by steamer from Louisville; for, then, steam-boats had been put on the river.

“At that time, as well as I can remember, there were three steam-boats on the Mississippi—the Volcano, the Vesuvius, and the *Ætna*. We embarked on the *Ætna*. A steam-boat was then a matter of such great curiosity that many persons got on board to ride a few miles down the river, where they were to be landed, to return in carriages. The captain of the *Ætna*, Robinson De Hart, had been a sailor in his earlier days, and he always used a speaking-trumpet and spy-glass when landing the boat to take wood. Our voyage was slow and uneventful, and we reached home in safety.

“I had been absent two years, and my brother Isaac accompanied me home, stopped at the village near my father’s house, and told me to go on and conceal my identity to see if they would know me. I found my dear old mother sitting near the door, and, walking up with an assumed air to hide a throbbing heart, I asked her if there had been any stray horses round there. She said she had seen a stray boy, and clasped me in her arms.

“After we had become somewhat calmer, I inquired for my father, and was told he was out in the field. I, impatient of the delay, went there to meet him. He was a man of deep feeling, though he sought to repress the

THOMAS JEFFERSON.



expression of it whenever practicable ; but I came to him unexpectedly. Greatly moved he took me in his arms with more emotion than I had ever seen him exhibit, and kissed me repeatedly. I remember wondering why my father should have kissed so big a boy.

“ My father was a silent, undemonstrative man of action. He talked little, and never in general company, but what he said had great weight with the community in which he lived. His admonitions to his children were rather suggestive than dictatorial. I remember a case in point, which happened after my return from Kentucky, while I was at the County Academy.

“ A task had been assigned me in excess of my power to memorize. I stated the case to the teacher, but he persisted in imposing the lesson. The next day it had not been mastered, and when punishment was threatened I took my books and went to my father. He said, ‘ Of course, it is for you to elect whether you will work with head or hands ; my son could not be an idler. I want more cotton-pickers and will give you work.’

“ The next day, furnished with a bag, I went into the fields and worked all day and the day after. The heat of the sun and the physical labor, in conjunction with the implied equality with the other cotton-pickers, con-

vinced me that school was the lesser evil. This change of opinion I stated to my father when coming from the field, after my day's cotton had been weighed. He received the confidence with perfect seriousness, mentioned the disadvantages under which a man, gently bred, suffers when choosing a laborer's vocation, and advised me, if I was of the same opinion the next day, to return to school; which I did, and quietly took my accustomed place. He had probably arranged with the teacher to receive me without noticing my revolt.

"The dominies of that period were not usually university men. Indeed their attainments and the demands of their patrons rarely exceeded the teaching of "the three R's," and the very general opinion held by that class was that the oil of birch was the proper lubricator for any want of intelligence. I well remember two boys, with whom I went to school, one of them dull, the other idle, but both of them full, broad-shouldered boys, able to bear the infliction, which they rarely failed to receive, of one or more floggings a day. The poor boy who could not learn took it very philosophically, but the other insisted that whipping a boy was very apt to make him a lying hypocrite.

"The method of instruction in these old log

school-houses was very simple. It consisted solely of a long copy-book—the qualifications required of the teacher being that he should be able to write at the head of each page the pot-hooks, letters, and sentences which were to be copied by the pupil on each line of the paper.

“As the pupil advanced, he was required to have a book for his sums. He worked out the examples in the arithmetic, and, after a sufficient amount of attention, he was required to copy this into a book, which, when it was completed, was the evidence that he understood arithmetic. After some time a bright boy could repeat all the rules; but if you asked him to explain why, when he added up a column of figures, he set down the right and carried the left-hand figure, he could give the rule, but no reason for it. And I am not sure that, as a general thing, the teacher could have explained it to him.

“The log-cabin schools were not public schools in the sense in which that term is used to-day—for the teacher was supported by the fees charged every pupil.

“I was next sent to school in Adams County, Miss., to what was called, and is still known as, Jefferson College. I was then about ten years of age. The principal was a man of great learning, qualified to teach pupils

more advanced than those he received. There was an adjacent department (over which a Scotchman presided) to teach the smaller children, and his methods were those of the earlier times—to prescribe the lesson and whip any boy who did not know it.

“The path along which I travelled to the school-house passed by the residence of an old dominie who had a great contempt for Latin. Why, he never told me, nor could he have told me, as he knew nothing about it; but whenever he saw me walking along the path, he would shout out, grinningly, ‘How are you getting along with you hic, hæc, hoc?’ I had been there but a short time when the County Academy of Wilkinson was organized, and I returned home and went daily from my father’s house to the school-house until I was sufficiently advanced to be sent to the college known as the Transylvania University of Kentucky.

“At the head of the County Academy was a scholarly man named John A. Shaw, from Boston. He took on himself, also, the duty of preaching every Sunday; but as there was no church, he held his meetings in the court-house. The boys of the Academy were required to attend, and very soon they became his only audience; when, like a conscientious, sensitive man, he notified the



trustees that he would preach no more. He explained to them that with him it was a profession ; that he agreed to preach for a stipulated salary ; but, unless he thought he was doing good, which the absence of the people showed to be doubtful, he was neither willing to preach nor to receive the salary. He continued solely under the pay received as principal of the Academy.

“ He was a quiet, just man, and I am sure he taught me more in the time I was with him than I ever learned from any one else. He married in our county, and after the death of his wife returned to Massachusetts ; but, whether he acquired new tastes during his residence in the South, or from whatever reason, he returned after some years to New Orleans, where he was Superintendent of the Public Schools when I last heard from him. I was very much gratified to learn that he remembered me favorably, and mentioned it to one of his pupils who had been named for me. He was the first of a new class of teachers in our neighborhood, and was followed by classical scholars who raised the standard of ability to teach and of the pupils to learn.

“ The era of the dominies whose sole method of tutition was to whip the boy when he was ignorant has passed.”

## CHAPTER III.

### AT TRANSYLVANIA UNIVERSITY.

“FROM the Academy presided over by Mr. Shaw I went to Lexington, Ky., to enter the Transylvania University. Having usually been classed with boys beyond my age, I was quite disappointed to find that the freshmen of the college I wanted to enter were much younger than myself, and I felt my pride offended by being put with smaller boys. My chief deficiency was in mathematics, which had been very little taught in the Academy. The professor of mathematics, Mr. Jenkins, kindly agreed to give me private lessons, and I studied under him for the balance of the session and through the vacation, so as to enable me to pass examination as a sophomore. He was a classical scholar as well as a mathematician, but he had very poor material to work upon, as it was mainly languages and metaphysics that were considered desirable to know at that time. His health failed while I was taking lessons from him, leaving

me in the meantime to study as much as I could or would ; he availed himself of the vacation for going away.

“ After I had been for some time studying by myself, a senior from Louisiana, who had taken some interest in me, inquired how I was getting along. I told him how far I had gone. He was very much surprised, undertook to examine me, and found that I did not recollect the letters that were put on the figures in the book, which he told me were necessary. I began at the beginning to memorize the letters. When the professor returned, and I explained to him the difficulty encountered, he laughed and told me that if the senior knew his letters that was all he ever did know, and he would rather I should learn the problem without the letters than with them ; by which I was greatly relieved.

“ Our professor of languages was a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin—a fine linguist, with the pronunciation of Latin and Greek taught in that College, which I then believed, and yet believe, to be the purest and best of our time.

“ The professor of these last-named branches, and vice-president of the University, was a Scotchman, Rev. Mr. Bishop, afterward president of a college in Ohio (Kenyon, I believe it was), a man of large attainments

and very varied knowledge. His lectures in history are remembered as well for their wide information as for their keen appreciation of the characteristics of mankind. His hero of all the world was William Wallace.

In his lectures on the history of the Bible his faith was that of a child, not doubting nor questioning, and believing literally as it was written.

"About this I remember a funny incident. He was arguing for a literal construction of the Testament, and said that valuable doctrines were lost in the habit of calling those teachings of our Lord 'Eastern allegories.' 'Now, my hearers, I will, if you please, read one of the passages with the words, "Eastern allegories" where your learned friends think they occur. "And all the Eastern allegories besought him, saying, Send us into the swine that we may enter into them, and he forthwith gave them leave. And the Eastern allegories went out, and entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea."'

"Mr. Bishop was going on gravely reading when a titter aroused him. He looked up astonished, and said, 'Sobriety becometh the house of God.'

"A vulgar boy, in the junior class, committed some outrage during the recitation,

which Dr. Bishop chose to punish as became the character of the offender. His inability to draw a straight line on the blackboard caused him to keep a very large ruler, broad and flat, with which he used to guide the chalk. Calling the boy to him, he laid him across his knee and commenced paddling him with the big ruler. The culprit mumbled that it was against the law to whip a collegiate. 'Yes,' said the old gentleman, momentarily stopping his exercise, 'but every rule has its exceptions, Toney.' Then he whacked him again, and there would not have been a dissenting voice if the question had been put as to the justice of the chastisement.

"Among my college mates in Transylvania was a tall country boy, true-hearted and honest, with many virtues but without grace or tact. The sight of him always seemed to suggest to Mr. Bishop the question of the Catechism, 'Who made ye, Dauvid?' to which Atchison always answered, 'Gaud,' and Mr. Bishop invariably responded, "Quite right, Dauvid; quite right." I left him in the college when I went to West Point, and afterward, when I met him in the United States Senate, in which he was one of the Senators from Missouri, my first greeting was, 'Who made ye, Dauvid?' I loved him when we were boys, and he grew with growing

years in all the graces of manhood. David R. Atchison, now no more, but kindly remembered even by those who disagreed with him politically, was a man of unswerving courage and stainless honor.

“The University of Transylvania was fortunate in so far that its alumni were favorites in public life. My dear and true friend, George W. Jones, of Iowa, was of our class, and with me, also, in the Senate of the United States ; S. W. Downs, of Louisiana, was a graduate of Transylvania, and so was Edward A. Hannegan, both of whom were subsequently United States Senators. When I was serving my first term as United States Senator, I was one of six graduates of Transylvania who held seats in that chamber.

“In my time, the college proper (over which the very brilliant Horace Holly presided), consisted of a medical department, with such distinguished professors as Drake, Dudley, Blythe, Cook, Richardson, Caldwell, and others. The law department was well, although not so numerously attended as the medical and theological ; its professor was that real genius, Jesse Bledsoe, who was professor of common law. Some sectarian troubles finally undermined the popularity of the President of the Transylvania University, and the institution has probably never recovered

the high reputation it had in 1820, and the years immediately following.

“There I completed my studies in Greek and Latin, and learned a little of algebra, geometry, trigonometry, surveying, profane and sacred history, and natural philosophy.”

The Honorable George W. Jones, of Iowa, in a memoir of my husband, written at my request, says :

“Jefferson Davis and I were classmates at Transylvania University, Lexington, Ky., in 1821. My acquaintance with him commenced in October of that year. At that time young Davis was considered by the faculty and by his fellow-students as the first scholar, ahead of all his classes, and the bravest and handsomest of all the college boys.

“Major Theodore Lewis, who served in the Mexican War with Mr. Davis, told me that he often slept by the side of the then Colonel Davis, and that he never awoke at night that he did not find him reading when off duty. Major Lewis had been a college mate with Davis and myself at Lexington, Ky. He assured me that Davis was as devoted a student during that campaign (the Mexican War) as he had always been when a college classmate of ours. Governor Dodge, while we were brother Senators and

brother housekeepers (most of the ten or twelve years) often extolled Mr. Davis for his studious habits while they served together in the First Regiment of United States Cavalry, never, he said, neglecting a single duty as Adjutant of his command.

"At college, Mr. Davis was much the same as he was in after-life, always gay and buoyant of spirits, but without the slightest tendency to vice or immorality. He had the innate refinement and gentleness that distinguished him through life. He was always a gentleman in the highest sense of the word. Aside from the high moral tone and unswerving devotion to conscience which characterized his whole career, Mr. Davis was always too gentle and refined to have any taste for vice and immorality in any form. He never was perceptibly under the influence of liquor, and never gambled.

"This statement concerning him, though based primarily on my personal knowledge of Mr. Davis, is not unsupported by the testimony of others who were equally intimate with him.

"In November, 1823, Jefferson Davis was appointed to a cadetship at West Point Military Academy, New York, by President Monroe, and we drifted apart."

Judge Peters, of Mount Sterling, Ky., was



another classmate of Mr. Davis at Transylvania.

“When I was with him,” wrote the Judge, as soon as he heard of Mr. Davis’s death, “he was a good student, always prepared with his lessons, very respectful and polite to the President and professors. I never heard him reprimanded for neglecting his studies, or for misconduct of any sort, during his stay at the University. He was amiable, prudent, and kind to all with whom he was associated, and beloved by teachers and students. He was rather taciturn in disposition. He was of a good form, indicating a good constitution; attractive in appearance, a well-shaped head, and of manly bearing, especially for one of his age. He did not often engage in the sports of the students, which was playing at football; perhaps he did not choose to lose his time from his studies.”

A friend of the family, Mr. Joseph Ficklin, was postmaster of Lexington. He lived in an old-fashioned brick house at the corner of East High Street. It is still standing and but little changed in its exterior. There young Davis boarded. Mr. and Mrs. Ficklin were extremely proud of the cheerful, gentlemanly boy, and made him happy with their kind treatment and good and dainty fare.

Indeed Jeff was usually so dignified, deco-

rous and well-behaved, that they fell into the way of treating him like a man of thirty.

There was a visitor at the house who was about twenty-three or four years old. He had large views, and was "penetrated by esteem and respect" for his own personality to such a degree as to arouse the indignation of the younger people and to amuse the older ones. One day there came out an urgent appeal for this aspiring young person to run for sheriff of the county, reciting, in turgid style, his fitness for the work. It was signed "*Many Voters.*" Lexington was a village then, and this audacious suggestion set the whole town agog. The advertisement had been enclosed to the paper with the money for its publication, and nothing more. Many guesses were made. The young person whose name had been suggested remarked, with an air of superior dignity, that he knew some persons had thought of him for an important office. Mr. Ficklin looked at Jeff, whose crimson face and jerking muscles showed him laboring to suppress something, and called him out of the room, when, amid peals of laughter, the joke was divulged. Jeff confessed that he had sent the card to the paper. He was always fond of a joke, and very full of gay suggestions until the fall of the Confederacy; but never afterward.

In 1852 we were in Lexington. Mr. and Mrs. Ficklin gave us an evening entertainment, and many pleasant people were invited to meet us. I saw Mr. Davis, across the supper-room, take Mrs. Ficklin's hand and kiss it very respectfully.

In a little while she came to me and said, "Jeff is the same dear boy he was when he was sixteen."

He went every day, while we remained, to see the aged couple.

## CHAPTER IV.

### ENTERS WEST POINT.

MR. DAVIS continued his autobiography by saying :

“ I passed my examination for admission to the senior class, and as it was so long ago I may say that I had taken an honor, when I received intelligence of the death of my father. He died on July 4, 1824, at the age of sixty-eight.”

No son could have loved a father more tenderly. When Mr. Davis was thirty-nine, he came accidentally upon a letter of his father's which he tried to read aloud, but handed it over unread and left the room unable to speak. Below is a quaint, pitiful letter from the bereaved boy to his sister-in-law, after hearing of his father's death. The formal manner of the letter he retained as long as he lived.

“LEXINGTON, August 2, 1824.

“DEAR SISTER: It is gratifying to hear from a friend, especially one from whom I had not heard from so long as yourself, but the intelligence contained in yours was more than

sufficient to mar the satisfaction of hearing from anyone. You must imagine, I cannot describe, the shock my feelings sustained at the sad intelligence. In my father I lost a parent ever dear to me, but rendered more so (if possible) by the disasters that attended his declining years.

“When I saw him last he told me we would probably never see each other again. Yet I still hoped to meet him once more, but Heaven has refused my wish. This is the second time I have been doomed to receive the heart-rending intelligence of the *Death of a Friend*. God only knows whether or not it will be the last. If all the dear friends of my childhood are to be torn from me, I care not how soon I may follow.

“I leave in a short time for West Point, State of New York, where it will always give me pleasure to hear from you.

“Kiss the children for Uncle Jeff. Present me affectionately to Brother Isaac; tell him I would be happy to hear from him; and to yourself the sincere regard of

“Your Brother,

“JEFFERSON.

“MRS. SUSANNAH DAVIS,  
Warrenton, Warren County, Miss.”

“My oldest brother, who then occupied to me much the relation of a parent, notified

me that he had received the news of my appointment as a cadet in the United States Military Academy; and, fearing the consequences of being graduated at the early age of seventeen, he insisted that I should proceed at once to West Point. Of course I disliked to go down from the head class of one institution to the lowest in another; but I yielded and went to West Point, to find that I was too late; that all the candidates had been admitted in June or the first of September; that the classes were engaged in their studies; and that the rule was absolute as to the time of admission. But Captain (afterward General) Hitchcock, then on duty in the Academy, had known my family when he was on recruiting duty in Natchez, and asked a special examination for me. Chance favored me. There was just then a Mr. Washington, who had been permitted, on account of his health, to leave the Academy for a year or two. He had gone to France, and, because of his name, had received the advantage of the Polytechnique. He had returned to find that his class had been graduated, and asked to be examined on the full course. The staff were in session examining Mr. Washington. This chance caused me also to be examined, and to be admitted out of rule.

“As soon as permission was given to ap-

pear before the staff, Captain Hitchcock came and told me that I would be examined, particularly in arithmetic. He asked, 'I suppose you have learned arithmetic?' To which I had to answer in the negative. But I added that I had learned some algebra and some geometry, and also some application of algebra. He was quite alarmed, and went off and got me an arithmetic, telling me to study as much as I could of fractions and proportion. I had hardly commenced when an order came to bring me before the staff. The professor of mathematics asked me one or two questions in regard to vulgar fractions and the difference between vulgar and decimal fractions, which I knew enough algebra to answer, and then asked how, the three terms of a direct proportion being given, I would put the fourth. I answered that the proportion was that the fourth should bear to the third the relation that the second did to the first. 'Certainly, certainly,' he said, probably thinking that I knew a great deal more than I did. Then they requested me to read and to write; and as I did so legibly, the French professor was authorized to determine what section of French I was to be put in, and to examine me upon languages. To his gratification he learned that I read Greek, and launched into a discussion of some

questions as to the construction of Greek, with which he was so delighted that he kept on till the superintendent stopped him, and that broke up my examination.

“Since that time I have never believed that an examination formed a very conclusive rule of decision upon the qualification of a person subjected to its test.

“I had consented to go to the Academy for one year, and then to the University of Virginia, which was just beginning to attract attention in quarters remote from it.

“But at the end of the year, for various reasons, I preferred to remain, and thus continued for four years, the time allotted to the course.

“When graduated, as is the custom at West Point, we were made brevet second lieutenants, and I was assigned to the infantry, and, with others of the same class, ordered to report to the School of Practice at Jefferson Barracks, near St. Louis, Mo.

“When I entered the United States Military Academy at West Point that truly great and good man, Albert Sidney Johnston, had preceded me from Transylvania, Ky.; an incident which formed a link between us, and inaugurated a friendship which grew as years rolled by, strengthened by after associations in the army, and which remains to me yet,



a memory of one of the greatest and best characters I have ever known. His particular friend was Leonidas Polk, and when Johnston was adjutant of the corps Polk was the sergeant-major. They were my seniors in the Academy, but we belonged to the same 'set,' a name well understood by those who have been ground in the Academy mill.

"Polk joined the Church from convictions produced, as I understood, from reading 'Gregory's Letters'—a noted religious work of that day—aided by the preaching of our eloquent and pious chaplain, who had subsequently a wide reputation as Bishop McIlvaine.

"A word as to chaplain McIlvaine. In appearance and manner he seemed to belong to the pulpit, and he had a peculiar power of voice rarely found elsewhere than on the stage. From its highest tones it would sink to a whisper, and yet be audible throughout the whole chapel. His sermons, according to the usage of his Church—the Episcopalian—were written beforehand; but, occasionally, he would burst forth in a grand tide of oratory, clearly unpremeditated, and more irresistible than it probably would have been had it been carefully written. For example: He was once preaching, and, just behind him, was visible the mountain pass through which the

Hudson flows, when a gathering storm was seen approaching West Point. That coming storm he wove into his sermon, so that the crash of one fitted into a great outburst of the other. They seemed to belong to one another—the sermon and the storm.

“ Among the cadets then and subsequently distinguished was Alexander D. Bache, the head of the first or graduating class, when I entered the Academy. He was a grandson of Benjamin Franklin, and, to the extraordinary genius of his grandfather, was added an elementary education in physical science. He had a power of demonstration beyond that of any man I ever heard ; so much so that, by way of illustration, I have often stated that I believe he could explain the highest astronomical problems to any one of good understanding, if he would acknowledge at the beginning his entire ignorance and admit when he did not understand any point in the progress of the demonstration. He graduated at the head of his class in 1828. He resigned after a few years’ service in the Engineer Corps of the army, became President of Girard College, and went abroad to study the European system of instruction.

“ After his return from Europe we met, and he told me that the thing which surprised him most was the system of the West Point

Academy, where any boy, regardless of his endowments or previous preparation, was required to learn the same things in the allotted time; and implied that, what astonished him most was that he should have gone through the Academy without even realizing that. In defence of the institution I reminded him that it was not intended for popular education, but to prepare as many as were required from year to year for appointments in the army; that, therefore, it might well be that one might have a genius for something not specially required of a soldier, and be unable to learn a thing that was needful. The consequence would be that he would have to carry his talents into some calling for which he was especially endowed.

“To take this extraordinary genius for illustration, though he readily mastered every branch of the curriculum of the Military Academy, and would doubtless have been useful as an engineer in the army, his career as a civilian proved that another field was more peculiarly his, and that he could there render greater service to his country. In the year 1842, on the decease of Mr. Hasler, Professor Bache was appointed Superintendent of the Coast Survey, and introduced methods and established rules in regard to triangulation and deep-sea soundings which have given to

the American coast and sea border the best charts, I think, in existence, and which will remain for Bache an enduring monument. A great-grandson of Benjamin Franklin and grandson of Alexander Dallas, Secretary of State under Mr. Jefferson's administration, he seemed to have inherited the common-sense and the power to apply science to the utilities of life of the one, and the grace and knowledge of men possessed by the other.

"In the succeeding class, the cadet who held the first place was William H. C. Bartlett, of Missouri. He is a man of such solid merit and exemption from pretensions that I am sure he will pardon me for stating in regard to him what may be a useful incentive to others under like embarrassments. The C in his name stands for Chambers, the Colonel of the First Infantry, who was interested in the boy and secured for him an appointment as cadet, when Chambers was gratefully added to his Christian name as a token of his obligation. His own preparation had been so small that, in addition to learning his lessons at night, he told me that he had to use a dictionary to find out the meaning of the words in the text, and an English grammar to teach him how to construct his sentences in demonstrations. Yet, despite these drawbacks, he led his class from first to last.

After graduation he was assigned to the Corps of Engineers, and afterward was employed as Assistant Professor of Engineering in the Academy. After serving in the construction of several military works, he became Professor of Natural and Experimental Philosophy in the Military Academy, where he was growing old with insufficient compensation, and which post he resigned to accept the better pay of actuary in the Mutual Life Insurance Company.

"In his conduct there was a total want of self-assertion, and a modesty which rendered him prone to believe that others possessed the same capacity as himself. For example, he offered me the last book he wrote on natural philosophy. With thanks I told him "it had more mathematics, no doubt, than I could master." "No," he answered, "you might say there are no mathematics in it." And to him there seemed to be very little, because in a page he would have a little equation, easily decipherable to him, but involving a world of trouble to one of less knowledge and mathematical genius."

Here ended the dictation that, had my husband's life been spared, he intended to continue, giving a full and familiar history of his public and private life. While on his sick-bed he told me, "I have not told what I wish to

say of my classmates Sidney Johnston and Polk. I have much more to say of them. I shall tell a great deal of West Point, and I seem to remember more every day."

Full of loving memories of the friends of his youth, intent, rather on doing justice to them than telling of his own exploits, he went to join them. Now their united labors have met their reward. The glory they so well earned will never fade.

## CHAPTER V.

WEST POINT, 1818-25.

GENEALOGY OF THE HOWELL FAMILY—LIEUTENANT HOWELL'S  
VISIT TO NATCHEZ—HIS MARRIAGE—PURCHASE OF HURRI-  
CANE PLANTATION—VISIT TO WEST POINT.

THE friendship between the Davis family and my own began about this time.

My grandfather, Major Richard Howell, was born in Delaware.\* His great-grandfather was a Howell of Caerleon, Monmouth County. One of the sons moved to Caerphilly, Glamorganshire, Wales, where he was "seated" until he moved to Delaware about 1690, and became a large planter there. One of his daughters married Colonel John Read, "the signer." Richard, the father of William B. Howell, was a practising lawyer in Mount Holly, N. J., before the Revolution, and his only brother, Lewis, was a surgeon.

Richard Howell married Keziah Burr, a member of the Society of Friends, and upon the breaking out of the war of the Revolution

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\* For some of these particulars I am indebted to my friend and cousin, General Meredith Read, of the United States Army, who is too much esteemed and too widely known to need other introduction to my readers. For other data I am obliged to my cousin, Justice Daniel Agnew, of Beaver, Pa.

he joined the Continental forces among the first and raised a company. He eventually became major of a regiment.

Major Richard Howell, of the New Jersey Continental line, was born in Delaware, in 1753. He first signalled his patriotism in November, 1774, by assisting in destroying the tea landed by the Greyhound, at Greenwich, N. J.

In 1775, Richard Howell was captain of the Fifth Company, Second Battalion, in the first establishment of the New Jersey line.

November, 1775. — The battalion was placed in garrison on the Highlands, on the Hudson.

February, 1776.—He accompanied his battalion to Canada, in the expedition against Quebec, and his company fired the first gun on the plains of Abraham.

September, 1776.—Appointed Major, Second Regiment, New Jersey troops, General Maxwell's brigade, Major-General Stevens's division.

Major Howell participated in the battles of Brandywine, Germantown, and Monmouth, with such marked distinction as to merit and receive the commendation of General Washington.

The day before the battle of Monmouth Major Howell had leave of absence to visit



his dying twin brother, Surgeon Lewis Howell; but the unexpectedly near approach of the armies led him to remain and, prepared for his journey as he was, in citizen's clothes, to fight in the ranks as a private. General Washington commended him warmly for his self-sacrifice. When the battle was over he was too late and never saw his brother afterward.

At the personal solicitation of General Washington he was selected, for his known qualities, to go upon a secret mission of an honorable character to New York, which was then in possession of the British. He not only accomplished the object of his mission, but secured a quantity of clothing for the ragged troops, for which he personally paid. He made no claim to have the money returned, and never received it.

After the war Major Howell returned to the practice of the law, and in course of time became Chancellor of the State.

The New Jersey *State Gazette*, of May 4, 1802, says: "In 1788 he (Richard Howell) was appointed Clerk of the Supreme Court, which office he held until 1793, when he was elected Governor of the State, to which honorable station he was for eight terms re-elected successively. From failing health he declined another tender of the office.

"With a highly cultivated mind and im-

proved understanding, Governor Howell displayed a heart of unbounded benevolence, a temper easy and equable, and manners polite and engaging."

He died on the Wednesday "preceding" the 4th of May, 1802.

Governor Howell's daughter, Sarah, afterward Mrs. James Agnew, of Pittsburg, Pa., with General James Chesnut's mother, were appointed, with ten other young ladies of high social position, to scatter flowers in General Washington's path at the Trenton bridge, and Governor Howell wrote the poetic welcome which was recited upon his arrival.

My father, William Burr Howell, was the fourth son of Governor Richard Howell and Keziah Burr. When quite young he was appointed an officer in the Marine Corps, and served with distinction under Commodore Decatur in the war of 1812, in the engagements on the lakes. Though quite ill, he had come on deck to participate in the fight. At one time the fire was so hot that a stool was shot from under him, and a tin cup of water, which was being handed to him at the same time, was struck out of his hand by another ball. He was three times commended in orders for extraordinary gallantry in action. His brother, Franklin Howell, was killed by a splinter on the President,

and instead of the "bad bust" which Byron dreaded, was commended in orders, and his name printed "John Howell" in a book entitled "The Naval Monument."

After peace was declared my father came in 1815 in a flat-boat down to Natchez, to look at the country; he was then an officer on half-pay and on leave. Very soon after he reached there he became intimate with Mr. Joseph Emory Davis, who was practising law. They became so mutually attached that when, in 1818, Mr. Joseph E. Davis, attracted by the great fertility of the alluvial land on the Mississippi River, called by the settlers "the bottoms," had taken up a section of the "wild land," thirty-six miles below Vicksburg, in Warren County, in the State of Mississippi, he proposed to my father, who thought of leaving the United States Navy, to join him in the purchase and cultivation of the land; but, after riding over the tract, my father feared the malarial effect of the lowlands upon his health and declined.

Scattered about through this land, and adjoining it, were some small holdings of twenty-five or thirty acres. These Mr. Joseph E. Davis bought, so that he became the owner of the splendid body of land now known as "Davis Bend." Mr. Davis had but little money left after paying for his large tract of

land, and he took his father's negroes and a few of his own with which to "open a place," *i.e.*, to clear and cultivate it, which he did with great success.

A part of this tract he sold at little more than government price to friends, who would, he hoped, become good neighbors; a large proportion of it is now owned by the heirs of General Quitman. He reserved to himself about five thousand acres in one tract, which is still owned by the Davis family. Very soon after he began to cultivate the place, a dreadful storm tore away the improvements so far made, killed the little son of his brother Isaac, his active partner in the purchase, and Mr. Isaac Davis's leg was broken. From this time the place was called "The Hurricane," a name which it bears to this day. Mr. Joseph Davis continued the practice of law until his marriage, in 1827, when he retired to "The Hurricane," which he made his home until the fall of New Orleans threw the country above that city open to invasion.

In 1823, Mr. Howell married Miss Margaret Louisa Kempe, third daughter of Colonel James Kempe. Mr. Davis acted as groomsman, and the first child born to the young couple, a boy, was named Joseph Davis after him. He had previously known my mother

when a little girl at school, and been fond of her rosy face and sprightly prattle. Thus the intimacy begun between the families, grew apace and ripened into three intermarriages in three generations.

Colonel Kempe, who by birth was an Irishman, commanded a company at New Orleans, and then at Pensacola, in the same war. He was a man of classical education, many accomplishments, of large wealth, great liberality, and led in all patriotic enterprises in the home of his adoption.

In 1825 my father was advised to go north for the health of his eldest child, Joseph Davis, and he, my mother, and their baby's nurse, in company with Mr. Joseph E. Davis, took a carriage, and with two led horses drove through "The Wilderness" to the crossing on the Ohio River, and there took a boat for Brownsville. These journeys then consumed months of weary travel, and must have required the travellers to be in the enjoyment of good health to bear them. After crossing the Ohio they met in the stage Mr. Cruikshank, the English caricaturist, and Robert Dale Owen, the founder of New Harmony. Mr. Cruikshank was a genial, cheery, old gentleman, who played with the baby and noted all the facial peculiarities of the people they met on the road. At that early date the characteris-

tic type of the American face was not as apparent as it is now, and he noticed the trace of different strains of blood which had been mingled with the Anglo-Saxon. He stated a fact which has been verified since in a great measure by observation, that every man who painted a picture of the Blessed Virgin or of our Lord—no matter of what nation the model might be—gave to it the unmistakable type of his own nationality.

Mr. Owen used to begin his conversations by saying, "Man is the creature of surrounding circumstances." He was one day very busy explaining his theories of the proper mode of treating children in infancy to Mr. Joseph E. Davis. He said that the most impartial person was the best guardian and educator for a child from infancy. For instance, an aunt was a better nurse than a mother, and a friend than either; that a child would not cry violently more than twice if laid in a cradle and left alone. Its common-sense would teach it that the scream did not bring any relief and it would stop. Mr. Cruikshank, who was dandling little Joe, said, "Those were cowardly civilized British babies, were they not, Joe? You Americans will teach Mr. Owen better than that."

These agreeable men rendered the journey pleasant, and at last the cheery young people

reached New York in safety, and bade their English friends an unwilling farewell.

Mr. Joseph E. Davis was so anxious to see his "little brother" that as soon as practicable the whole party went up to West Point. As the boat neared the landing a very stout, florid, young fellow of about eighteen came running down to the landing-place and caught Mr. Joseph E. Davis in his arms. He said little, but my mother was struck by his beautiful blue eyes and graceful strong figure. He slipped his hand through his brother's arm and sat very close to him, but otherwise made no manifestation of feeling except a silent caress. My mother spoke of his open bright expression in a letter preserved, and my father mentioned that young Jefferson Davis was a "promising youth." Mr. Davis remembered her exceeding beauty and changing color. This was their first acquaintance with the man who was to be their son-in-law twenty years afterward. The party remained a few hours and returned to New York.

A fellow-cadet thus speaks of Cadet Davis:

"Jefferson Davis was distinguished in the corps for his manly bearing, his high-toned and lofty character. His figure was very soldier-like and rather robust; his step springy, resembling the tread of an Indian 'brave' on the war-path."

While at West Point Mr. Davis came near escaping all the anguish and turmoil of his life by a fall. He and Emile Laserre, a fellow-cadet, went down to Bennie Havens's on a little frolic—of course without leave. There was a rumor of one of the instructors coming, and the two young men rushed off by a short cut to get back to barracks, and Cadet Davis fell over the bank, and as he afterward found, he had been precipitated sixty feet to the river bank. Fortunately he caught at a stunted tree, which broke the force of his fall, though it tore his hands dreadfully. Young Laserre looked over the face of the rock and called out, "Jeff, are you dead?" Mr. Davis said he was suffering too much to laugh, remembered the desire to do so, but could only move one hand. He lay ill many months afterward, and was expected to die for some weeks.

One of the professors, at sight, had taken a great dislike to Cadet Davis. There was never a recitation which did not witness a duel of eyes or words between them. The professor was popular with the rank and file of the class, but for some reason or other these two were especially antipathetic. The professor tried to entrap the boy into errors in recitation, and he, in turn, endeavored to find an opportunity to "get even" with the man in



authority. One day the professor was giving a lecture on presence of mind being one of the cardinal qualities needful for a soldier. He looked directly at his young enemy and said he doubted not that there were many who, in an emergency, would be confused and unstrung, not from cowardice, but from the mediocre nature of their minds. The insult was intended, and the recipient of it was powerless to resent it.

A few days afterward, while the building was full of cadets, the class were being taught the process of making fire-balls, and one took fire. The room was a magazine of explosives. Cadet Davis saw it first, and calmly asked of the doughty instructor, "What shall I do, sir? This fire-ball is ignited." The professor said, "Run for your lives," and ran for his. Cadet Davis threw it out of the window and saved the building and a large number of lives thereby. A person to whom a friend was telling the story in Mr. Davis's presence asked him if he did not take a great risk. He said, "No, I was very quick, and felt sure I had time to 'try him.'" General Thomas Drayton wrote of this circumstance: "Jeff, by his presence of mind, saved many lives and also the building from being demolished." His horror of oppressing the weak was exhibited throughout his life, and though the

professor grew old, honored by the generality of the cadets, Mr. Davis never changed his opinion of him.

In 1826, at Christmas, there was a great riot in the corps of cadets. Cadet ——, his room-mate, was discovered and dismissed with several others. Davis was implicated unjustly. Because his room-mate had been mistaken for him he would not explain, and consequently was under arrest for a long period, and his already numerous demerits received a considerable addition.

He did not pass very high in his class, but attached no significance to class standing, and considered the favorable verdict of his classmates of much more importance.

Cadet Davis's pay at West Point was the only money he had ever earned, and after the first month he laid aside a goodly portion of it, albeit a small amount, each month, and sent it to his mother, who once or twice returned it to him, but on finding that it distressed him, kept it, much to his delight. His distinguishing trait, after that of mercy, was filial love and duty.

During all his life he remembered his old companions at West Point, and wrote many loving words to General Crafts, J. Wright, his old and dear friend Sidney Burbank, Professor Church, Professor Mahan, and others, who had been friendly or kind to him there.

## CHAPTER VI.

FORT CRAWFORD, 1828-29.

CADET DAVIS graduated in July, 1828, received the usual brevet of Second Lieutenant of Infantry, went to visit his family on a short furlough, and then reported for duty at Jefferson Barracks, St. Louis. There he found Lieutenants Gustave Rousseau, Kinsman, Thomas Drayton, Sidney Johnston, and several other old and dear friends. Very soon after Lieutenant Davis arrived there he was sent up to Fort Crawford, built on the site of what is now Prairie du Chien, in Wisconsin. The Fort was then in an unfinished condition, and he aided in building a larger and more impregnable fortification, as the Indians were then in a restless condition, and the muttering of hostilities that soon burst forth into war-cries, could now be plainly heard.

Fort Crawford was situated on the Wisconsin, near its junction with the Mississippi, and was, at an early day, the northern limit of the Illinois tribe. It was a starting-point for their raids against the Iroquois who occupied the land around Chicago. On Jeffrey's map of

1776, a line is drawn from Prairie du Chien to Omaha, and inscribed "French route to western Indians." In the "Colonial Records of New York," p. 621, it is mentioned as one of the three great routes to the Mississippi. Prairie du Chien, as early as 1766, was described as "a great mart, where tribes from the most remote branches of the Mississippi annually assemble, bringing with them their furs to dispose of to the traders."

The Indians built forts even before the white men came to the country, to protect themselves from the hostile tribes, and the French, wary and industrious, as is their wont at this day, built a fort wherever they halted for a week. Marquette and the Jesuits each fortified their mission-houses. In 1727 Father Guignas wrote in his diary, when establishing himself on the north bank of Lake Pepin, "the day after landing we put our axes to the wood. On the fourth day following, the fort was entirely finished." These were not, however, very elaborate fortifications. They were generally square, and inclosed by pickets of red cedar, with sentry-boxes at two of the angles. The pickets were thirteen or fourteen feet above ground.

The fort at Prairie du Chien, though built at an early day, was certainly not the first constructed there. It has been ascertained that

the French had established one at a much earlier period, and that during the revolutionary war it was burned. The name of the French fort was St. Nicholas.

The Rev. J. D. Butler, after reading of the struggles of the soldiers sent out to man the frontier said: "The strongholds and soldiers, north, south, east, and west, were pillars of cloud by day and of fire by night, to guide, cheer, and save pioneers into the *terra incognita* of Wisconsin. . . .

"Had half of these gentlemen been as careful to write their experiences as Clarke and Lewis were, even when drenched with rain, or when the ink was freezing, the world would have known by heart the merits of the military."

The beauty of the country about Four Lakes has been often extolled by travellers, and the Indians seem to have been fully as well aware of its charms as were the white men.

When the Indians saw this fair country being slowly wrested from their grasp, they grappled with the invaders and made a long and bold struggle for the prize, and thus it became necessary to build more forts and station a stronger force there. In 1816, a fort was built at Chicago, and one at Prairie du Chien, for the better protection of the fur traders, the miners, and those who tilled the

teeming soil, and these forts, in those days, were literally cities of refuge.

Of a reconnaissance made in that country, General George Jones wrote: "The next I knew of 'Jeff,' as we used to call him, was in 1829. He had graduated at West Point, and had been assigned to duty as second lieutenant in a United States infantry command at Fort Crawford, Prairie du Chien, then Michigan Territory, but now the State of Wisconsin. It was late in the year, and late, one night, when a lieutenant and a sergeant rode up to my log-cabin at Sinsinawa Mound, about fifty miles from Fort Crawford, and inquired for Mr. Jones. I told him that I answered to that name. The lieutenant then asked me if they could remain there all night. I told him that they were welcome to share my buffalo robes and blankets, and that their horses could be coralled with mine on the prairie.

"The officer then asked me if I had ever been at the Transylvania University. I answered that I had been there from 1821 to 1825.

" 'Do you remember a college boy named Jeff Davis? ' "

" 'Of course I do.' "

" 'I am Jeff.' "

"That was enough for me. I pulled him

off his horse and into my cabin, and it was hours before either of us could think of sleeping.

“Lieutenant Davis remained at my cabin for some days, and after the unconstrained manner of early frontier life we had a delightful time.”

While stationed at Fort Crawford in 1829 he commanded a detachment for cutting timber to repair and enlarge the fort. They embarked in one of the little open boats, then the only mode of conveyance, and, accompanied by two *voyageurs*, began their journey. At one point they were hailed by a party of Indians who demanded a trade of tobacco. As they appeared to have no hostile intentions the little party rowed to the bank and began the parley. However, the *voyageurs*, who were familiar with the methods of Indian warfare, soon saw that their peaceful tones were only a cloak to hide their hostility. They warned Lieutenant Davis of the danger, and he ordered them to push out into the stream and make the best time they could up the river. With yells of fury the Indians leaped into their canoes and gave chase. There was little, if any, chance for the white men to escape such experienced rowers as their pursuers were. If taken captive, death by torture was inevitable; and

they would have been captured had not Lieutenant Davis thought of rigging up a sail with one of their blankets. Fortunately, the wind was in their favor, but it was very boisterous. As it was a choice between certain death by the hands of the Indians, or possible death by drowning, they availed themselves of the slender chance left and escaped.

This was one among many instances of Mr. Davis's fertility of resources when a sudden exigency arose. In speaking of the incident, fifty years afterwards, he said: "The Indians seemed to me to be legion."

The requisite timber for the repairs he found among the hackmatack, cedars, and other varieties of timber that grow near the Menomonee, or Red River. Lieutenant Davis was camped ten miles from the mouth of the Menomonee, and just below the mouth of the Chippewa, the first stream that empties into that river.

When the timber was rafted, the oxen and outfit were placed upon it, but the swift stream sucked it into a side current of the Chippewa river. The raft was broken up, several of the oxen drowned, and the whole work had to be done over again. In consequence of this accident it was called the Beef Slough, and is so named to this day; but from 400 to 500 millions of logs pass yearly through it now.



Four miles from where Lieutenant Davis logged in the wilderness is Menomonee, a city of 7,000 inhabitants. Where he cut and banked the timber a railroad now runs.

A Western historian, whose name was not communicated when the newspaper slip was sent me, mentions Lieutenant Davis thus: "Jefferson Davis was the first lumberman in Wisconsin. In the year 1829, when a lieutenant in the First Regiment, he was detailed to ascend the Mississippi, with a company of men, in birch bark canoes, and stopping at the first pine forest, to cut, raft, and float a sufficient quantity of timber down the river to build a fort at what is now called Prairie du Chien.

"On the opening of the river in the spring of 1829, long before the day of steamboats on the Upper Mississippi was known, but while the country was in a savage state of nature, with the black bear, the elk, and the deer in the greatest abundance; while Indian wigwams were the only evidence of habitations that greeted the eye of civilized man; this little band of soldiers pursued their way up to the mouth of the Chippewa, one hundred and seventy-five miles from Prairie du Chien. Then Lieutenant Davis concluded to leave the Mississippi and descend the Chippewa, which he did until they came to the mouth of

what is called the Red Cedar River. Up this stream they worked their way about forty miles, when they came to the splendid pine which adorns the banks of the Red Cedar. At this point, where the beautiful and thriving village of Menomonee now stands, they disembarked, went into camp, and began the labor for which they came. At this point and this time the sound of the white man's axe was first heard in the pine forests of Wisconsin."

The service then performed seems a mere every-day matter, if the condition of the country, the shifting character of its population, and even of its boundaries be not considered, as well as the menace under which every order was carried out. Death might hurtle forth from behind any tree or bush, and an eagle's plume be added to the head-dress of a blood-thirsty Indian.\*

Once, while busy cutting timber on the banks, the alarm was given, and the party barely escaped being seen by a fleet of canoes which passed, full of Indians, in war-paint, singing their war-songs. One canoe landed, and a warrior reconnoitred within twelve feet of the place in which Lieutenant Davis lay concealed. Amidst constantly recurring

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\* An eagle's feather was added to a warrior's head-dress for each scalp he took.

alarms, with force inadequate to their defence, sleeping at night in the open air, and watching hourly for an attack, they finished their arduous service and returned to Fort Crawford.

Illustrating the shifting boundaries of the territories General A. C. Dodge mentioned the remarkable history of a house near Burlington. "It was built by that pioneer and honored lawyer 'Timber' Woods. Here one of his children was born, in the territory of Michigan; the next child, born in the self-same cabin, was a native of Wisconsin, and the third was in the territory of Iowa." As a companion to this story the general mentioned that the "Hon. Mr. Duncan, living not far from Carydon, without changing his residence, first served as a member of the Missouri Legislature, and afterward as a member of the Iowa Territorial Legislature."

There were few amusements for the young men in the long winter evenings. Sometimes what were called "gumbo balls" were got up by the neighboring settlers, at which the respectable young women of the different families were present, and the officers and other people of the neighborhood danced with them. The refreshments generally consisted of a large bowl of gumbo and an ample supply of bread. Once the "fiddler" was ill;

and a disconsolate old Frenchman wailed out, " Oh de ball is broke, it is broke ; " but two little girls, with clear, sharp voices were found, and, seated behind the open door, they sang for the dancers, " The moon it is a rizin, Jinnie, come away," and the gay young people found no fault with the musicians.

Here the frontiersmen used to bring wolves to the officers for races, as foxes are chased with horse and hound. It was their favorite game. Sometimes they fought their dogs against the wolves, and Mr. Davis and General Harney, four years ago, when the general was our guest, were comparing their recollections of a wolf fight with their dogs, and General Harney seemed very proud of chasing a wolf down, on foot, and having what he called a " fist fight " with it, during which he choked it to death by main force.

These amusements were diversified by sleigh rides in the depth of winter over the frozen river, and notwithstanding that every day they risked losing their scalps, life flowed on with them about as cheerily as it does now with the officers who have more comfortable and safer quarters.

**FORT WINNEBAGO IN 1829.**



## CHAPTER VII.

FORT WINNEBAGO, 1829-31.

IN the autumn of 1829 Lieutenant Davis was ordered down to Fort Winnebago, where he remained until 1831. This fort was built in 1828, opposite the portage, about two miles from the junction of the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers.

As late as 1830 the only mode of reaching Green Bay from Chicago, and from thence to Fort Winnebago, was by schooner, and the journey sometimes consumed three months. The intermediate country in many portions was unexplored by white men, and was generally occupied by friendly Indians ; but intercourse with these was rendered doubtful by the secret treaties of amity between the different " Nations." The accidental death of an allied Indian at the hands of a white man might, at any time, compel friendly Indians to assume a hostile attitude, and the first intimation of the change would be received by a sudden descent upon some new and thriving post, the inhabitants be massacred, or worse, their women and children carried into captiv-

ity and their homes left in ruins. There were no roads, in our acceptation of the term, though the Indians could draw with some correctness the topography of the country; and as far as what is now Tennessee, they traced their maps with fair accuracy, using a stick for a pencil and the ground for their canvas. The Indian "trails" were always traceable, especially those that led from the Sac and Fox villages to Fort Malden. This was then the high road for traders and Indians also; it is so in a measure now, as well as the old "Dragoon trail," made by the First Dragoons when they crossed from Fort Winnebago to the village of Chicago, now traced by tradition in the West.

As the largest sutler's store in the West was kept at Winnebago, there were always a great many Indians about the portage. The love for gambling was as strong among them then as it is now. In Lieutenant Davis's day, however, it took the form of betting on horse fights. He described a long log house in which the horses were trained. Spectators clambered up the outside and looked through the chinks, and as the horses within fought, the lookers-on encouraged them with cries and shouts to do their utmost. When one of them was driven into a corner by his antagonist and refused to come out, the battle was



ended. The Indians, he said, would stake their last blanket and string of wampum, and even their bows and arrows upon these horse fights. A whole band betted invariably on the pony which belonged to one of their number.

Another one of their amusements was a dance called the "Discovery Dance;" it consisted of slow steps forward and back, and a pantomime in which each Indian recounted his warlike exploits. They became wildly excited toward the last and danced in a most grotesque manner. During these dances no Indian, however mendacious he might be at other times, told anything but the exact truth. They often believed themselves visited by visions during which revelations were vouchsafed to them, after which they blacked their faces and made vows of abstinence which were usually sacredly observed.

Tochonegra, the Otter, was a very dark Indian boy, so named on account of his capacity for diving after fish. He used to stand on the prow of his canoe, armed with a spear which he threw at the fish when he saw them swimming in the clear water, diving after them and seizing his wounded prey in his hands. Lieutenant Davis took a fancy to the little Indian, who, being an orphan, lived with his aunt. She was a remarkable squaw. Her phenom-

enal strength had gained for her such a place among her tribe that she was even allowed occasionally to join the war party.

Tochonegra once came down to the sutler's store with his face blackened and announced his determination to eat nothing during that day. Lieutenant Davis saw some particularly good raisins there and bought them for the child. Tochonegra, as he had no pockets, dropped some of them on the ground, but finding no place where he could safely put them away, commenced to eat them, much to the amusement of the store full of frontiersmen to whom the sutler called out: "Just look at Tochonegra eating with his face blackened." The little boy was very much mortified and slunk away. However he returned in a few moments with his face clean and crammed the raisins into his mouth by the handfuls, amidst the laughter of the spectators. He was not more respectful to the dreams of his fellow Indians.

A hunter who imagined himself commanded by the Great Spirit to offer up the proceeds of his autumn hunting upon a certain tree in a desolate neighborhood, fell a victim to Tochonegra's irreverence or common-sense. One day driving along a frozen river, with a number of officers, Lieutenant Davis was hailed by a little boy whom he recognized as

Tochonegra, who was dragging his sled in the same direction. They stopped for him while he tied his sled to the back of theirs and drove along, dragging him after them until he called out that he had reached his destination. The officers were much astonished at the place at which he got off, as there was neither Indian wigwam nor house in the neighborhood, and their curiosity induced them to wait and see what the little fellow's next proceeding would be. He climbed painfully up the snow-covered bank, and getting up the tree on which the sacrifices were suspended, proceeded to untie and load them on his sled. He then walked away, dragging his plunder after him. Lieutenant Davis subsequently discovered that he sold them for a round sum at the sutler's store.

The bow was then the principal weapon of the Indians, and the Osages had acquired great renown on account of the superiority of the wood from which this arm was made. In the far West on the prairies, the scarcity of wood reduced them to making their bows of the buffalo ribs which were bound with green sinews and left to harden and shrink. Although difficult to bend and uncertain of aim at long distances, they were terrible weapons at close quarters. Mr. Davis said that he had seen an arrow shot from such a bow pass

completely through the body of a buffalo and fall on the other side. However, the Indians of the plains valued the wooden bow so highly that they willingly supplied many horses for a piece of wood with which to make one.

Annually the Indians went to the fort to get the presents issued by the British Government to them, and all the Indian tribes, with the exception of the Wyandotes and the Miamies, from the time the French transferred them to the English, maintained a steady friendship with them. The English carefully fostered this feeling by yearly presenting whiskey, calico, cotton, blankets, paints, knives, arms, and all the rest of their barbaric and warlike paraphernalia.

They were "tied by the teeth," as the saying is; "and verily this be a potent cord wherewithal to keep thy friend."

Little settlements had grown up on these trails, then the only roads, as the necessities of the fur-traders and those of occasional travellers required them. These little hostelries became celebrated throughout the Northwest, and the men who found in them "rest and food and fire," remembered the Wentworths and Arndt families, as well as many others, with much friendliness.

"Fort Winnebago was situated on the Fox River, the course of which is so tortuous that

the Indian legend was that an enormous serpent that lived in the Mississippi River went for a frolic to the Great Lakes. On his journey he left his trail through the prairies, and this collected the waters from the meadows, and the rains from heaven as they fell, and became the Fox River." \*

"In the front lay an extent of meadow, across which was the portage road, about two miles in length, between the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. Teams of oxen and a driver were kept at the agency by the Government to transport the canoes of the Indians across this place, which at many seasons was wet, miry, and almost impassable. Before an agency was established here the Indians took toll from every trader who crossed the Fox River, requiring all the furs to be unpacked and counted before them. At the request of Mr. John Jacob Astor an agency was established at this portage."

At Fort Winnebago Lieutenant Davis was again busy with the improvements upon the fort, enlarging and perfecting the defence of the approaches as the hostility of the Indians became more pronounced.

Mrs. Kinzie gives a humorous account of

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\* Wau Bun ; or, The Early Day, by Mrs. John H. Kinzie, page 80, to whose sprightly and valuable book I am indebted for much information of the Indian country.

his efforts to furnish the garrison quarters. She describes his furniture thus. After saying she was to have two rooms in General Twiggs's house until her own could be built, she said:

“The one in the rear was to be the sleeping apartment, as was evident from a huge, unwieldy bedstead, of proportions amply sufficient to have accommodated Og, the king of Bashan, with Mrs. Og and the children into the bargain. We could not repress our laughter; but the bedstead was nothing to another structure which occupied a second corner of the apartment. This edifice had been built under the immediate superintendence of one of our young lieutenants, and it was plain to be seen that upon it both he and the soldiers who fabricated it had exhausted their architectural skill. The timbers of which it was composed had been grooved and carved; the pillars that supported the front swelled in and out in a most fanciful manner; the doors were not only panelled, but radiated in a way to excite the admiration of all unsophisticated eyes. A similar piece of workmanship had been erected in each set of quarters to supply the deficiency of closets, an inconvenience which had never occurred, until too late, to the bachelors who planned them. The three apartments, of which each structure was

composed, were unquestionably designed for clothes press, store room, and china closet; such, at least, were the uses to which Mrs. Twiggs had appropriated the one assigned to her. There was this slight difficulty, that in the latter the shelves were too close to admit of setting in even a gravy-boat, but they made up in number what was wanting in space. We christened the whole affair, in honor of its projector, a 'Davis;' thus placing the first laurel on the brow of one who was afterward to signalize himself at Buena Vista, and in the cabinet of his country." When laughed at about his furniture he said, "The *armoires* were not intended for ladies' use, and the shelves were exactly the length of a gentleman's coat, without the necessity of folding it, and were made close together to hold each one separately."

There were several of his classmates stationed at Winnebago at this time, and the meetings gladdened him greatly.

There was some drinking and much gambling, but Mr. Davis never did either. General Harney also refrained from these vices; and Mr. Satterlee Clarke, a few years ago, noticing that these two were the only survivors of that garrison, attributed their health to this fact. He added that they were considered two of the best officers at the fort.

Colonel Harney was fond of gardening, and his vegetables were noted as the finest in the fort; he cultivated the garden partially himself, and was liberal of its products to the officers' wives. While he tilled his "green patch," as he called it, Mr. Davis read, studied, rode crazy horses, and had hairbreadth escapes from being killed by them. Once his horse reared until it fell in the effort to unseat its rider, but he jumped off as it fell, and as the horse rose he leapt into the saddle again.

Reconnaissances were made every few days of the most dangerous character. Death rode on the croup with every man who left the fortified posts, so that with the excitement about Indians, the daily round of duties, and such social pleasures as could be interspersed among them, Lieutenant Davis passed the time until he was ordered to the lead mines.

From Fort Winnebago he went out on several expeditions against the Pawnees, Comanches, and other hostile Indians.

The early history of the settlement of the Western country being almost unwritten, a great interest has been awakened in the minds of the present residents and a desire to know how their forefathers wrested it from its savage proprietors. Many historical questions were asked Mr. Davis which he desired to answer at such length that he, unfortunate-



ly, did not find health or time serve him in which to make appropriate response until too late; but he wrote to Professor J. D. Butler, who interrogated him on some mooted points of history, "while on detached service in the summer of 1829, I think, I encamped one night about the site of Madison. The nearest Indian village was on the opposite side of the lake. Nothing, I think, was known to the garrison of Fort Winnebago, about the Four Lakes, before I saw them. Indeed, sir, it may astonish you to learn, in view of the (now) densely populated condition of that country, that I and the file of soldiers who accompanied me, were the first white men who ever passed over the country between the Portage of the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers, and the then village of Chicago. Fish and water-fowl were abundant; deer and pheasant less plentiful. The Indians subsisted largely on Indian corn and wild rice. When sent out on various expeditions I crossed Rock River at different points, but saw no sign of settlement above Dixon's Ferry." That point had then been occupied by a white man only a year. This reconnaissance was a very bold and dangerous one, and one of many anecdotes of that period is inserted here.

The reconnaissance of which Mr. Davis spoke in this letter was a daring and danger-

ous one, and several times the party were near being massacred. They met a party of Indians upon their return and asked the way; a brave stationed himself in the path and indicated the wrong road. Lieutenant Davis without further parley spurred his high-mettled horse, called after Red Bird, upon the Indian, seized him by the scalp-lock, and dragged him after him some distance. The attack was so quick that it disconcerted the rest, and the soldiers rode by without further molestation.

Another of my husband's experiences was related to a lady friend at Beauvoir House, which shows his ready resources in time of trouble.

"In this conversation he told of an ice bridge which he built across Rock River, in Illinois, in 1831. He said he was going through Illinois with his scouts, when, reaching Rock River, he found the mail coach, and numbers of wagons with persons going to the lead mines, detained at the river. There was no bridge. The waters were frozen, yet not sufficiently so for them to pass over. The country was a wilderness. No house except that of the ferryman, whose name was Dixon. His log-cabin was near. The whole party put themselves at his command. He told them to keep a good fire in the cabin and set the men to hewing blocks of ice. They

worked faithfully, and ere long the structure began to assume shape. As each was set in position, water was poured over, which froze it in its place. Sometimes a workman would fall overboard, and he was ordered to run into the cabin and turn round and round before the blazing log-fire until dry; then he would resume work again. Soon the bridge was pronounced safe, and the whole party of men, women, children, and vehicles passed safely over."

The ferryman — Dixon — remembered the young army officer ever afterward most kindly, and some years ago, when Mr. Davis was invited to Illinois, a letter came from the old man, expressing his happy anticipation of meeting him once again on earth. Mr. Davis could not then accept the invitation, and not long since Mr. Dixon died.

Lieutenant Davis had at this time no beard, or so little as to be scarcely perceptible, and his smooth face, fresh color, and gay laugh, gave the impression of a boy of nineteen.

One of the soldiers employed on the building of the fort had been a terror to everybody about him. He was immensely strong, and very quarrelsome. This man announced his intention of whipping that "baby-faced Lieutenant if he attempted to direct him in his work. What could he know about work?"

This came to Mr. Davis's ears at once. The next day there was a piece of dressed scantling which he told the soldier to put in a certain place on the building. The man lifted a piece of rough plank to place it as directed. Lieutenant Davis explained once again. This time, with an insolent laugh, the soldier took a like piece to the one he had laid down. Knowing that one blow from the soldier would fell him, Mr. Davis picked up a stout billet of wood, and as the man stooped he knocked him down and beat him until he cried for quarter. The other soldiers looked on until the conflict was ended, at first thoroughly sympathetic with their messmate, who was considered by them invincible, but as soon as the slight, plucky young officer came off victorious, they raised a shout for him, and when the victor said, "This has been a fight between man and man and I shall not notice it officially," his antagonist also gave in his submission, and the men under him, from that day, required only to know his orders to obey them with a will.

The talent for governing men without humiliating them, which Mr. Davis had in an eminent degree, cannot be acquired; it is inborn, a royal gift of nature to the person possessing it, and is the outcome of a sense of justice, personal dignity, self-denial, sympathy with

the governed, and unflinching courage. He never had, with soldiers, children, or negroes, any difficulty to impress himself upon their hearts.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### YELLOW RIVER, 1831.

IN 1831, while Fort Crawford was still in the process of construction, Lieutenant Davis was ordered up to Yellow River to superintend the building of a sawmill. While he was commanding his small force at Yellow River, where he built a rough little fort, he succeeded in conciliating the neighboring Indians, and gained their regard to such a degree that he was adopted by a chief within the sacred bond of brotherhood, which exists among the aborigines of the West, as it does among the Greek races of the peninsula. This relation is of so sacred a character that nothing short of the most absolute treachery can break it.

Lieutenant Davis was afterward dignified with the title of "Little Chief."

An old Indian woman, bent with age, who remembered the friendly young lieutenant, and did not know he was no longer there, a year or more after he had left the post, travelled a long distance at the risk of her life, and warned his successor of a contemplated attack by the hostile Indians when the grass should

be "long enough to hide a man." Her advice was disregarded and a massacre was the consequence.

Lieutenant Davis's labors were arduous, and during this time he was closely encompassed by bands of hostile Indians. The country was very wild; and he was indefatigable in his energetic pursuit of his duty. The weather was intensely cold, and he was often wet to the skin for hours. The exposure brought on pneumonia, and he lay for many months at this isolated place, directing, as best he could, the operations of the men from his bed. He became so emaciated that his servant, James Pemberton, used to lift him like a child from the bed to the window. During this period James carried the arms, the money, and everything of value possessed by his master, knowing that, at any time, he could be free with the simple ceremony of leaving-taking; but he remained throughout the whole period of Mr. Davis's service on the frontier, as tender and faithful as a brother; and he was held nearly as dear as one.

Mr. Davis once gave a reminiscence of this sawmill, during the Confederacy, to a very assuming young major who came to pay us a visit. He talked diffusely about the manner in which he planked shad for champagne suppers "on my plantation." He then

went on to tell of the fine company he had kept "a week at a time," etc. Mr. Davis became very tired and said, "I used to be a pretty good hand at planking fish when I had the honor to be at the head of a sawmill." The major looked his astonishment and said, "Of course it was your own sawmill." "By no means," said the President. "I was paid to do it. I cut the timber first, then sawed and rafted it."

In about a week we heard that Mr. Davis and Mr. Lincoln had both been raftsmen on the river, and Mr. Davis had been hired to saw lumber in the West for many years. It amused him greatly, and he never explained the mistake.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE GALENA LEAD MINES, 1831-32.

IN 1824 the first steam-boat reached Prairie du Chien. In 1827 Red Bird's capture gave a sense of security to the settlers, and they went in numbers to the lead mines at Galena, where, seven years before, only one house was standing. In 1829, the lead extracted amounted to twelve millions of pounds, but the treaties with the Indians, which secured this teeming country, had not been formally closed, though the fact of a treaty having been initiated was known. Colonel Willoughby Morgan, commanding the First Regiment of Infantry, and the post of Fort Crawford, in 1830, sent Lieutenant T. R. B. Gardenier to Jordon's Ferry, now Dunleith, with a small detachment, to prevent trespassing on the lead mines west of the Mississippi River and north to Missouri. In the autumn of 1831, Colonel Morgan died, and Colonel Zachary Taylor was promoted to the command of the First Infantry, who were then stationed at Prairie du Chien. The uneasiness about the Indians increasing, the regiment was ordered to Rock

Island. It moved up the river in Mackinac boats, and passed the Dubuque mines *en route*. The Indians, who had collected in some force in the neighboring country, on hearing of this advance, returned to Iowa, fearing that a larger force might follow.

The miners, on hearing rumors of a treaty, moved over to Galena and took possession of the lead mines. The Indians protested; and in consequence of an order from General McComb, Colonel Taylor sent a detachment of troops to remove the miners until the treaty could be signed, and the Indians had formally relinquished their claims to that portion of the country. Lieutenant George Wilson was sent there, with sixteen men, to remove the miners, who numbered four hundred. The troops arrived at Jordon's Ferry on the sixth day of their travel, and camped on the spot which is now the foot of the main street at Dubuque, where there were then three cabins.

Shortly after the arrival of the troops, the miners moved in a body to the Island, now the principal landing-place of the city, leaving some of their families in their cabins. Lieutenant Wilson, in a letter in 1865, says he thought it was too cold at the time to remove the trespassers. However that may have been, Colonel Taylor at once sent Lieutenants Abercrombie and Jefferson Davis, with fifty

men, to accomplish their removal. Lieutenant Davis had previously held some intercourse with them, when on duty near Dubuque, and was, as usual, with those whom he came near enough to know, on friendly terms with them. He said that all these frontiersmen were armed to the teeth, believed themselves to be wronged, and were determined to resist any effort made to drive them out of the mines to the last extremity. Most of them were men of the better class of pioneers. He felt the greatest reluctance to use force against them, and thought seriously and long over the best means of placating them, while he carried out his orders.

On the day he held his first conference with them, he crossed the river to inform them of his instructions, and was met by a dozen or more rugged and resolute-looking men thoroughly armed. In the background was a Spanish-looking woman. The spokesman was a tall, red-headed man, who opened the conference with the announcement that they had resisted the former officers detailed to remove them from the mines, and "if he knew when he was well off he had better leave honest men alone and quit showing partiality on the Indians." Lieutenant Davis said that he was convinced from this man's manner that the miners contemplated armed resistance,

and he therefore announced in the plainest terms the determination of the Government to remove them, by force if necessary. He then asked a private interview with the spokesman; they walked off a few yards and sat down together. Lieutenant Davis made a full statement of the case and satisfied the miner that the security of his friends in the possession of the country and of their old claims was only a question of time and patience. He explained that the necessity for their removal was in order that the Indian claims might first be peacefully disposed of by treaty. He then went over to the group, and raising his voice over their murmurings, made his first public speech. At the beginning of it the miners interjected irritating remarks, but eventually listened in silence. The woman was the last to surrender.

Some weeks after this meeting, Lieutenant Davis crossed the river for another conference with them. In a little drinking booth on the edge of the mines, were gathered about twenty-five miners, with the red-head man, as usual, in the ascendant. As Lieutenant Davis came up to the cabin his orderly entreated him not to go in. "They will be certain to kill you," he said; "I heard one of them say they would."

Lieutenant Davis entered the cabin at once,

and, as they expressed it, "gave them the time of day." \* He immediately added, after saluting them, "My friends, I am sure you have thought over my proposition and are going to drink to my success. So I will treat you all." Whether admiration of his daring, or that reconsideration had changed their policy, was never known; what is certain is, that they gave him a cheer.

With admirable patience and judgment, for many weeks, he listened to the complaints of each family, supplied them with the means lacking for their convenience in moving; registered and described their claims, and pacified the whole body of belligerents. He thus proved himself worthy of the thanks expressed for this service in the resolutions of the Legislature of Iowa, passed many years afterward, when he lay wounded in Saltillo after Buena Vista. His old friend General George Jones, from whom I have quoted before, has given the subjoined memorandum of the service:

"In the winter of 1831-32 Lieutenant Davis was sent to the Dubuque lead mines, which, at the termination of the trouble, had been occupied by the squatters. He was directed by the War Department, through Colo-

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\* Which means, in frontier phrase, "Good-morning" or "Good-evening."

nel Zachary Taylor, to remove these squatters, Lieutenant Wilson having preceded him and having failed to drive the people off.

“Lieutenant Davis, by his conciliatory efforts and kindness, soon got them to leave under the assurance that their claims would be recognized as soon as the treaty made with the Sacs and Foxes should be ratified by the United States Senate, which he felt confident would be the case. He induced all the men to leave, but permitted one woman to remain in her husband's cabin, as the winter was excessively severe. She remained ever afterward his devoted friend, up to her recent death. While Lieutenant Davis was encamped opposite Dubuque, my present home, he often visited me. He was a great favorite with my boys, whom he often used to hold on his knees as if they had been his own. Two of them afterward served under him in the cause of the Confederacy.”

General Jones, who was there, added, in a letter written on the occasion of sending to a newspaper Mr. Davis's private letter to General Jones on the subject, in 1873: “This letter will be read with interest by your readers, and particularly by the descendants of the first settlers of these lead mines, whom ‘Jeff’ Davis, as he is sneeringly termed, was ordered and commanded to drive off at the point of

the bayonet, but whom he preferred to treat with kindness and humanity, promising them that he would use his influence to restore their mining and other rights as soon as the treaty should be ratified by the Senate of the United States."

Mr. Davis wrote: "I had known many of the miners when on the east side of the river, and on me mainly devolved negotiations with them to induce them peaceably to retire. I went to their residences, and explained the entire absence of any power on our part to modify or delay the execution of our orders, and being an intimate friend of Captain Legate, the superintendent of the lead mines, volunteered my services to secure, through him, to every man, the lead or prospect then held, as soon as the treaty should be ratified to extinguish the Indian title. It has always been to me a happy memory that the removal was accomplished without resort to force, and, as I learned afterward, that each miner in due time came into his own."

In this year came the first trial of the young patriot's devotion to the principles of constitutional government, and he contemplated the sacrifice of the hopes of his life rather than be untrue to what he considered the cause of liberty and State rights. He wrote:

"The nullification by South Carolina, in

1832, of certain acts of Congress, the consequent proclamation of President Jackson, and the 'Force Bill,' soon afterward enacted, presented the probability that the troops of the United States would be employed to enforce the execution of the laws in that State, and it was supposed that the regiment to which I belonged would in that event be ordered to South Carolina.

"By education, by association, and by preference I was a soldier; then regarding that profession as my vocation for life. Yet, looking the issue squarely in the face, I chose the alternative of abandoning my profession rather than be employed in the subjugation or coercion of a State of the Union, and had fully determined and was prepared to resign my commission immediately on the occurrence of such a contingency. The compromise of 1833 prevented the threatened calamity, and the sorrowful issue was deferred until a day more drear, which forced upon me the determination of the question of State sovereignty or federal supremacy—of independence or submission to usurpation."

The language of this brief statement of the case combines the expression of resolute and inflexible adherence to duty, with a touching and almost pathetic sense of the magnitude of the responsibility involved and of the



sacrifice required, the unaffected sincerity of which will be doubted by none who knew the character of Jefferson Davis.

“I was sent by Colonel W. Morgan, in the fall of the year, to watch the Indians, who were semi-hostile, and to prevent trespassing on the Indian territory. Smith, of Bate & Smith, had a smelting establishment on the east bank, just above Mr. Jordon's residence, where they smelted the mineral brought to them by the Indians; but when the Indians left, their operations were confined to smelting the ‘ashes.’ I remained on duty there until the spring of 1832, and, though I made frequent reconnaissances into the country, never saw an Indian or any indication of their presence in that neighborhood. In the spring of 1832 I was relieved by Lieutenant J. R. B. Gardenier, as private matters required me to go to Mississippi, my home.

“In a short time reports of Indian hostilities caused the withdrawal of Lieutenant Gardenier, and soon followed the crossing to the river by the little war party mentioned in the sketch. After the campaign of 1832 Lieutenant George Wilson, with a few soldiers, was sent to Dubuque for the same purpose as that for which I had been sent there in the previous year; but on reporting to the commanding officer at Prairie du Chien that trespassers

were, despite his prohibition, crossing the river, a larger force was despatched to enforce the orders of the Government, and the laws relating to intercourse with the Indian tribes. Lieutenant J. J. Abercrombie and I were the officers of this reinforcement. It was in the depth of winter, so cold that we went all the way on ice."

## CHAPTER X.

FORT CRAWFORD, 1832-33.

MR. DAVIS wrote: "In 1832, Zachary Taylor became colonel of the First Infantry, with head-quarters at Fort Crawford, Prairie du Chien. The barracks were unfinished, and his practical mind and conscientious attention to every duty were manifest in the progress and completion of the work."

After the duty had been performed at Yellow River, Lieutenant Davis was ordered to Fort Crawford, where he was again active in the building of the fort. Several of the brightest men of Lieutenant Davis's class, his dear friends, were stationed there, and many of the officers had their families. Colonel Zachary Taylor had with him his wife, three daughters, and a son. Of these all were more or less associated with Lieutenant Davis's after-life.

Anne, the eldest daughter, one of the most excellent, sensible, and pious women of her day, became the wife of Dr. Robert Wood, who was afterward Surgeon-General of the United States Army. Sarah Knox became

Lieutenant Davis's wife two years after this time. Elizabeth married Colonel Bliss, who was General Taylor's adjutant during the war with Mexico, and became his private secretary during his Presidency. The only son, Richard, became a Lieutenant-General in the Confederacy, and was one of the most gallant and daring heroes of an army that was "the admiration of one continent and the wonder of the other." He was much beloved by Mr. Davis, who felt like a brother toward him. After the war he was the author of "Destruction and Reconstruction," a brilliant and witty book, which is as stirring and interesting as it is epigrammatical.

Mrs. McRee, the widow of the officer mentioned below, gave to Mr. Dousman the following account of Lieutenant Davis's relations with Colonel and Miss Taylor :

"The arrival of a steam-boat from St. Louis was the great event of the season. During the long winter the fort was fully two weeks' journey from the settlement in the States. Colonel Zachary Taylor, known in the campaign of 1848 as 'Old Rough and Ready,' and afterward President of the United States, commanded this fort. With him was Lieutenant Jefferson Davis, Major Thomas F. Smith, a fiery, gay officer of the old army, and Samuel McRee, the captain, and after-

ward Taylor's, and subsequently Scott's, paymaster-general in Mexico.

"Quarters were scarce at the fort, and Lieutenant McRee, his wife, and several little children, lived in a tent, where Lieutenant Davis and Miss Taylor were frequent visitors. Lieutenant Davis and Colonel Taylor's daughter, Miss Sarah Knox Taylor, became very much in love, and were to be married, with her father's consent.

When Lieutenant Davis proposed for the hand of Miss Knox Taylor, Colonel Taylor said to Mr. Dousman that "While he had nothing but the kindest feeling and warmest admiration for Mr. Davis, he was in a general way opposed to having his daughter marry a soldier. Nobody knew better than he the trials to which a soldier's wife was subjected. His own wife and daughter had complained so bitterly of his almost constant absence from home, and of their own torturing anxieties for his safety, he had once resolved that his daughter should never marry a soldier with his approval. Aside from this, however, there was no reason why the proposal of Lieutenant Davis should not meet with his warmest approval.

"Some time after this, a court-martial was being held, composed of Taylor, Smith, Davis, and a lieutenant whose name Mrs. McRee

had forgotten. There was an angry feud between Taylor and Smith. By the rules of the army, then and now, each officer sitting on such a court was bound to appear in full uniform. The lieutenant had left his uniform at Jefferson Barracks, near St. Louis. He asked the court to excuse him from wearing it. Taylor voted no, Smith voted aye, and Davis voted with Smith. Colonel Taylor became highly incensed. One thing led to another, until he swore, as an officer only in those days could swear, that no man who voted with 'Tom Smith' should ever marry his daughter. He forbade Davis from entering his quarters as a guest, and repudiated him utterly."

Lieutenant Davis served for a short time at Jefferson Barracks, and also at Prairie du Chien, with his friend Albert Sidney Johnston, where he became much attached to Mrs. Johnston, and rejoiced with them over the birth of their little boy, William Preston Johnston, who afterward served on Mr. Davis's staff while he was President of the Confederacy, and occupied the chair of history in the Washington-Lee University while General Lee was President; afterward, he was President of the college at Baton Rouge, and is now President of the Tulane University of New Orleans. Everywhere his course has

been marked by all the qualities that the friends of his illustrious father could have desired or expected to see developed in him. Descended from one of the greatest and purest men of his day, he was named after his uncle, William Preston, and if there is virtue in a name none could confer more honor or a better earnest of a noble life than that of General William Preston, of Kentucky.

Whenever Lieutenant Davis remained long enough to be known by the settlers, they thoroughly liked him, and he adapted himself to their way of life with a kindliness and ready sympathy which they appreciated heartily. Their peculiarities were many in number, but their high qualities, their generosity, courage, industry, and good faith, inspired him with sincere respect. With characteristic modesty he used to praise them for the great diversity of things they could accomplish and which he could not, and was never tired of speaking of their fertility of resources and their generous hospitality. They had little of the education of the schools; but, as he once said in speaking of them to a friend, "Sustained effort, danger, and the habit of living alone with nature had developed a thousand radical virtues."

Their conversation was interlarded with so many frontier phrases, heard nowhere else,

that it entertained him greatly. They coined words sometimes from the sound; a strip of rawhide in that day was called a "whang," probably because of the noise it made when plaited into a whip.

Mrs. Kinzie adds one example of the mode of expression of these people, of which Mr. Davis gave many instances. "A miner, who owned a wife and baby, in taking leave of us, 'wished us well out of the country, and that we might never have occasion to return to it. I pity a body,' said he, 'when I see them making such an awful mistake as to come out this way, for comfort never touched this western country.'"

There was a class of frontiersmen engaged in convoying travellers to and fro, up the rivers and bays and through the wilderness: these were called *voyageurs*. Certain people did special things, and had a monopoly of these duties. To the boatman or guide there was an allowance given, besides his pay, of one quart of lyed corn and two ounces of tallow, per diem, or its equivalent. There was a regular period of graduation, which was one of time. One year made an *engagé* or a *mangeur-de-lard*,\* the second an *hivernant*,†

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\* This name took its rise from the rations of tallow for which each *voyageur* stipulated when he hired himself.

† An *hivernant* was one who had worked for a winter.



the third a *voyageur*; and the *voyageur* considered it *infra dig.* to associate with either of the lower grades until their graduation. These men sang, and told frontier stories, cooked for their passengers, and procured every facility for making them comfortable that the wilds could afford. The *voyageurs*, occupied in these cares, contentedly ate their bread and maple syrup, chewed their kinni-kinnic, and were happy.

There were men who ran the mails, generally "Mitiffs," or half-breed Indians, and Mr. Davis mentioned one who ran forty miles in a day, with a heavy sack of mail. He did it by resting five minutes at every five miles.

Chippewa was the court language of the Indian world, and these *voyageurs*, with very few exceptions, could act as interpreters. They had a nomenclature of their own, and a patois rather difficult to translate; they designated people by their qualities rather than by their names. The Indians also received new names from the Canadians. The Chippewas were *Sauteurs*; Menominees, *Folles Avoines*; Ottawas, *Courtes Oreilles*; Winnebagoes, *Les Puans*, and other *sobriquets*, indicative of the peculiarities of each tribe.

The names of places which were corrupted from the English and French names of the

trees which grew about them, are now hardly traceable to their original source—for *Bois Blanc Island*, Bob Law's Island; for *Roche Percé Creek*, Roosha Persia Creek; *Piché's Grove*, Specie Grove; the latter was probably just where Oswego is now situated.

The frontier houses consisted generally of one room. When strangers came, who were rarely refused such hospitality as the people had to offer, a rope was stretched across from one wall to another, and whatever of clothing was removed before lying down, was thrown across this extemporized partition. All the family, of both sexes, occupied the same room. The frontier girls had few of the adventitious aids to modesty which we think so indispensable; but they were hardy, blooming, virtuous, truthful, and dutiful to their parents, obliging and industrious, and many of them possessed a remarkable share of personal beauty. Perhaps they would not, however, have impressed people like N. P. Willis, who declared he could perceive no beauty in any one "arrayed in unsophisticated calico."

Mr. Davis told how once he stopped at an old man's house, who lived near Vide Piché, and alluded, in admiring terms, to some very good-looking daughters, of whom his host was very proud. The father responded, "Yes, they *are* likely gals, and are the ner-

THE END

viousest and pompiusest gals in these diggings."

The white inhabitants in the West at that time were not less a noteworthy and picturesque population than the Indians. There was an old lady to whom Lieutenant Davis owed many kindnesses, who was so fearless, that, armed only with an axe, she once kept at bay a party of half-drunk Indians, but she had a great horror of ghosts. Once, in one of his many reconnaissances, he had been detained until late one night, and had taken shelter in a cave, which had been a sepulchre where he had slept peacefully until morning. On returning he told his hostess where he had passed the night; her face blanched and she asked him how in the world he could manage to sleep in such a terrible place, it had been an Indian burying ground. He answered, laughingly, that as they were dead Indians they did not trouble him, whereupon she rejoined: "I don't like them when they are dead; I am not afraid of any live Indian that I ever saw."

He had a store of such memories, furnished from peculiarities of the frontier people, among whom he spent the most impressionable part of his early manhood.

It was wonderful, in view of the crude state of the country, how the traditions of civiliza-

tion had operated upon the young people, who only knew it by the tales of their parents.

There were no schools, for there were not enough white children to support a school. The sister of General A. C. Dodge rode on horseback four hundred miles to Lexington, Ky., to reach a school. When he was first elected delegate to Congress from Iowa, he received forty votes at the Fort Snelling settlement, where St. Paul and Minneapolis now stand. In 1840 that region paid one hundred and twenty dollars taxes to the Clayton County tax-gatherer!

Now when demagogues rail at "West-Point education," "shoulder-strap aristocracy," "would-be satraps," "toy soldiers," with all the other choice epithets such critics have always in store, it would seem that in looking over the teeming, smiling West, while the whole United States feels the force of the golden stream pouring in from it, *Æsop's* fable of the quarrel among the members of the body might be suggested. The art of defence is learned in weariness, watchings, and self-denial. Had the art been new to these daring young men, who had been educated and refined, only to throw them out as a barrier against barbarism, to dwell among the unlearned for the best part of their lives, they must have succumbed to the forces arrayed

against them ; but the devices of science were united to the expedients suggested by the frontiersmen, and these magnificent powers were incorporated into a body which wrought great good in the undeveloped wilds of the Northwest. Shall the head not be respected by the hands ?

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE BLACK HAWK WAR.

THE events of this period, called the "Black Hawk War," have become so shrouded in the mists of time that a short statement of the causes will not seem inappropriate.

The name Sauke, now abbreviated to Sac, means yellow earth; Musquakee, now Fox, red earth. These two warlike tribes eventually became amalgamated; they were originally from the St. Lawrence River. The Foxes first settled at Green Bay, and the river near which they made their abode still bears their name. There they sustained a signal defeat by the united forces of the friendly Indians and French troops, and the slaughter was so great that the hill on which the engagement took place has ever since been called the "Butte des Morts." \*

From this and various other causes the two tribes were so depleted that they joined forces, and, though still keeping their com-

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\* This was modified by an old frontier settler, Mrs. Arndt, into "Betty Mores."

munity independence, became practically one tribe. The subsequent war with the Six Nations left them too weak to stand alone. La Houton speaks of a Sac village on Fox River in 1689, and Father Hennepin, in 1680, speaks of them as Ortagamies, and says they were residents of the Bay of Puants, now Green Bay.

Major Forsyth said: "More than a century ago all the country commencing above Rock River and running down the Mississippi to the mouth of the Ohio, up that river to the mouth of the Warbash, thence down the Miami of the lake some distance, thence north to the St. Joseph's and Chicago, also the country lying south of the Des Moines, down perhaps to the Mississippi, was inhabited by a numerous nation of Indians who called themselves Linneway or Illini, and were called by others Minneway, signifying "men."

After many wars, surprises, and massacres in their contests for supremacy against the Sacs, Foxes, and their allies, the four hundred braves who met them had dwindled to thirty or forty. The savagery of these tribes is almost incredible now; among the Miamies were cannibal Indians, who fed upon their prisoners when they did not burn them at the stake.

The Sacs and Foxes held their own terri-

tory, but descended the river in their bark canoes and fought their enemies with varying success and ever-increasing ferocity. The Illini confederacy claimed the territory on the east bank of the Mississippi, and lived in friendly intercourse with the villagers in the little settlement on the site of the city of St. Louis. Their enemies coveted this beautiful country for winter hunting-grounds, and determined to win it with their battle-axes.

The Sacs and Foxes owned no allegiance other than to the English, and made constant predatory, and sometimes murderous, incursions upon the white Americans and their allies, the friendly Indians. The killing of Pontiac, the Sauke chief, was the ostensible cause of their hostility ; but it was pretty satisfactorily established that the intrigues of the English were a more powerful incentive.

On Corpus Christi day, May 6, 1779, one thousand two hundred Canadians, reinforced by detachments of Ojibeways, Menomonees, Winnebagoes, Sioux, Sacs, and Foxes, commenced the attack upon the little walled town of St. Louis. The day had been observed always as a holiday, and the citizens were expected to be out looking for wild strawberries ; but, fortunately, warned by the rumors of a contemplated attack, only a few had gone to inspect their crops.



Some hostile Indians had been seen lying in ambush, which alarmed the inhabitants, and they insisted on the Governor calling upon the authorities at St. Genevieve for assistance. He at last yielded unwillingly to their demands, and had, on May 1, 1779, returned with sixty men, who were in the town when the attack was made.

It was sudden and violent, and about twenty citizens were killed in the field before they could regain the fort. Sylvio Francisco de Cartabana, the Spanish Governor, had gone to St. Genevieve and brought the militia from that post to aid in the defence of the town. When the attack commenced neither Cartabana nor his promised force were forthcoming, but lay hidden in a garret until the foe had retired; but the citizens stationed fifteen men at each gate and scattered the rest of their force along the line. They answered the irregular fire of the Indians by grape-shot from their few artillery guns, the intrenchments were formidable, and the cannon, to which they were not accustomed, completed the discomfiture of the attacking Indians. The Lieutenant-Governor, from illness, was not able to walk down to the front of the Governor's house to superintend the spiking of the cannon that defended the approaches to the little town, but ordered a suspension

of hostilities, and when those engaged in defending the gates, not having heard his order, did not obey, he had a cannon fired at them which tore down a part of their wall of defence. He had previously, under the pretext of a trade proper to be made in a time of profound peace, sold all the powder and ammunition of the garrison to the Indians.

Fortunately, in a private house, eight barrels of powder were discovered, and the citizens levied upon it, in the name of the king, for their defence. Colonel John Rogers Clarke, hearing of their peril, marched from Kaskaskia with a small force to the defence of the whites, but did not cross the river, as the Governor declined their services; but the Indians retreated. It was believed by the citizens that the Governors had been bribed by the British, who did not want any settlement there, lest it should revert to America, and become a stronghold against invasion by them.

The Illini, or Illinois Confederacy, consisted of five tribes—the Kaskaskias, Cahokies, Peorians, Temorias, and Michiganians—and were numbered by the Jesuits, in 1745, at four thousand. The victorious attacks upon them by the Sacs and Kickapoos, to revenge the death of their chief Pontiac, as well as to obtain a more southern country and greater

facilities for hunting, finally reduced this war-like people to a few mendicant stragglers, and thus barbarism and natural forces combined to aid the early settlers to drive the Indians not only out of their possessions, but out of existence.

Environed by superior numbers on all sides, but inured to hardship and danger, the pioneers pressed forward, their feet red with the blood of both whites and Indians, and acquired acre by acre the lovely country east of the Mississippi.

The American Fur Company had their principal post at Mackinac, with outposts scattered at different points on and near the Upper Mississippi. This advance-guard of civilization became wealthy, but took their lives in their hands, and it was an even chance whether they came out with the peltries of animals with which to decorate the potentates and beauties of the old world, or left their scalps to accentuate the figures of a warrior's dance, and their bodies to feed the wild beasts. What these frontiersmen endured is, fortunately, not to be estimated by us from our vantage-ground of peace and security.

The atrocities of the Indians had rendered the whites regardless of their rights or their sufferings. Spoliation by the whites had inflamed the Indians to the greatest degree, and

they turned for vengeance on their oppressors.

At last the conflict became incessant because indecisive, and after many bloody engagements, treaties signed and broken as soon as ratified, followed by massacres of the most cruel character, in which every imaginable atrocity was inflicted by the Indians upon their unhappy captives, General William Henry Harrison \* was directed by President Jefferson to make a treaty with the Sacs and Foxes, which was ratified in November, 1804, by which the United States bought the territory beginning on the Missouri River, thence in a direct line to the River Jefferson, thirty miles from its mouth down to the Mississippi, thence up the Mississippi to the mouth of the Wisconsin, and up that river for thirty-six miles in a direct line, thence by a direct line to where the Fox River leaves the Saukewan, thence down the Fox River to the Illinois, of which it is a tributary, and down the Illinois to the Mississippi.

This magnificent body of land, which gave free passage across the country to the Mis-

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\* The same in whose honor I had in childhood seen many dough log-cabins baked and carried in procession, flanked by barrels of hard cider, to barbecues in the groves about Natchez, where rousing Whig speeches electrified "the party." It was in praise of him, too, that the little children piped "For Tippecanoe, and Tyler too," as they ran after the *cortège*.

Mississippi from the east, watered by ever-flowing streams, where almost every cereal good for the food of man could be grown, was extorted from the Indians partly by treaty and partly by purchase, if \$12,000 to be paid in yearly instalments of \$1,000 per annum could be so called, when applied to the acquisition of 8,000,000 acres of land of unsurpassed fertility, extending from the upper end of Rock Island, from latitude  $41^{\circ} 15'$  to latitude  $43^{\circ} 15'$  on the Mississippi River.

Mr. Davis wrote: "The troubles on the Indian frontier, which had attracted attention in 1808, continued to increase in number and magnitude until, in 1811, General Harrison, afterward President of the United States, marched against the stronghold of the Shawnees, the most warlike of the hostile tribes, and whose chief, Tecumtha (The Walker), was first in sagacity, influence, and ambition, of the Northwestern Indians. While professing peace, he contemplated a general war between the Indians and the whites, and was said to be instigated and abetted by British emissaries. It is known that he sent out, and some suppose bore, the wampum to the Muscagees (Creeks) of Georgia. This supposition is fortified by the circumstances of his blood relationship to the Creeks, and by his absence when his brother, The Prophet, on

November 7, 1811, to prevent General Harrison's advance on the principal town, made a night attack on his camp at Tippecanoe. This battle, or rather the fear of its renewal, caused the Indians hastily to abandon their permanent village. General Harrison, with his numerous wounded, returned to Vincennes, and the field of his recent occupations was unoccupied.

“ On the following June, of 1812, war was declared against England, and this increased the widespread and not unfounded fears of Indian invasion which existed in the valley of the Wabash. To protect Vincennes from a sudden assault, Captain Z. Taylor was ordered to Fort Harrison, a stockade on the river above Vincennes, and with his company of infantry, about fifty strong, made preparation to defend the place. He had not long to wait. A large body of Indians, knowing the small size of the garrison, came, confidently counting on its capture; but, as it is a rule in their warfare to seek by stratagem to avoid equal risk and probable loss, they tried their various strategic expedients, which were foiled by the sound judgment, vigilance, and courage of the commander; and when the final attack was made, the brave little garrison repulsed it with such loss to the assailants that when, in the following October, General Hopkins came

to support Fort Harrison, no Indians were to be found thereabout. For the defence of 'Fort Harrison' Captain Taylor received the brevet of major, an honor which had seldom if ever before been conferred for service in Indian war.

"In the following November Major Taylor, with a battalion of regulars, formed part of the command of General Hopkins in the expedition against the hostile Indians at the head waters of the Wabash. In 1814, with his separate command, being then a major by commission, he made a campaign against the hostile Indians and their British allies on Rock River, which was so successful as to give subsequent security to that immediate frontier."

At the time of the treaty made by the Indians with General Harrison, the desire to make the transfer was not unanimous, and the friendly, politic, and aspiring chief, Keokuk, and some dissipated Sacs and Foxes, who were half drunk, united in placating the Winnebagoes present, who were so enraged at the inadequate sum offered, as well as at the constrained sale, that they wished to massacre the whole party of whites.

Black Hawk's village was on a lovely neck of land made by the union of the Rock with the Mississippi River. Gentle slopes, covered

with lush grass and adorned by fine trees, stretched out to join "a chain of beautifully rounded hills, over which trees are thinly scattered, as if planted to embellish the scene." In the front of the landscape is Rock Island, on the southern point of which is Fort Armstrong.

A slight stirring of the ground served, when planted, to bring corn and vegetables, which the squaws and children raised during the absence of the braves on their hunting-grounds. The Indians had built more than a hundred lodges, apportioned their land, and buried their dead there.

This latter circumstance was a great factor in the unwillingness of the Indians to be removed to another dwelling-place. As a paramount religious duty, they feed the spirits of their relations at stated times, for whose use to light these ghostly banquets they believed the moon to have been made. The Indians decorate and make moan over the graves as long as they live. To be separated, therefore, from the final resting-place of those they love, is more agonizing to them than even to civilized peoples. Whatever sense of home and permanence a savage felt, was centred there.

When the contract to sell the land was made, Black Hawk was off on a hunting ex-



pedition, and when he returned, and the Sacs and Foxes with him heard the treaty had been concluded, they coincided with the Winnebagoes that the price was ridiculously small. However, he gave a qualified, and to some extent a forced consent, to the treaty at Portage des Sioux in 1816, all the while protesting that the Indians had been previously made drunk who had signed it. He had never allied himself closely with the Americans, and did not pretend to like them. Having united with the British in the War of 1812, he served under them as a general, and exhibited courage not inferior to any. He declined, after the war, to relinquish the medals bestowed by the British upon him; he said he would take medals from both countries and have "two fathers." His sturdy allegiance to the English, and the fact, pretty well established, that he had been instigated by them to most of his hostile acts, caused his force to be called the "British Band."

While smarting under a sense of the injustice done him, Black Hawk and his band perpetrated many outrages upon the whites.

A recent historian has rescued the following gallant deed of General George W. Jones, of Iowa, from obscurity, and thereby given us a glimpse of the horrors the whites endured. General Jones verifies the story.

“ During the Black Hawk war word reached Galena that a brother-in-law of the general, named St. Vrain, who was agent for the Sacs and Foxes at Rock Island, was murdered by the Indians, some forty miles east of Galena. The general happened to be in Galena at the time, and notwithstanding the protestations of the people against the foolhardiness of attempting the rescue of his brother-in-law, if found alive, or the rescue of his body if dead, he mounted his horse, and under whip and spur dashed into the country alone in hot pursuit of his fallen comrade. He found his friend and relative dead, and horribly mutilated. Both hands were cut off, his feet amputated, his head severed from his body, and his heart cut out; and, as subsequently learned from an old squaw, the heart was divided into several parts and distributed among the youth of the band, with the assurance that the one who could swallow the largest slice of the white man's heart would be acknowledged superior as a ‘ brave.’ ”

For some of these atrocious acts Black Hawk and his sons, with Red Bird and several of the leaders engaged with him, were given up by the Winnebagoes in answer to the demand of General Atkinson at the head of the Second, Fifth, and Sixth Regiments of the United States Army, and he and his son

Kanonecan, or the Youngest of the Thunders, with Red Bird's son, were only released because the witnesses could not be produced to prove their undoubted guilt. On this occasion General Albert Sidney Johnston was present, and gave a fine description of Red Bird,\* who was somewhat over six feet in height, and of an ideal form.

"Although, after seeing the Sacs, Foxes, Menomonees, Sioux, etc., my romantic ideas of the Indian character had vanished, I must confess that I consider Red Bird one of the noblest and most dignified men I ever saw. When he gave himself up, he was dressed after the manner of the Sioux, of the Missouri, in a perfectly white hunting-shirt of deerskin, and leggings and moccasins of the same, with an elegant head-dress of feathers. He held a white flag in his right hand, and a beautifully ornamented pipe in the other. He said, 'I have offended, I sacrifice myself to save my country.' " If the introduction of this gallant figure be deemed irrelevant, let the fact that he died in prison waiting for a trial be my excuse, for I long to present him to some 'white faces' who will turn a kindly glance upon him."

Black Hawk fretted dreadfully during his

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\* Life of General Albert Sidney Johnston, by his son

confinement, in which the participation of his son probably did not prove a solace. He considered the Americans interlopers, himself a victim, and came out of prison far more bitter in his hostility than hitherto.

A merciless beating, which was given to him while hunting on Two Rivers, by the white settlers, who suspected him of theft, rankled all his life. Another reason for his hatred to the Americans he has touchingly related himself.

Black Hawk's last service under the British was in 1813, when Major Croghan repulsed the attack on Fort Stephenson made by Colonel Dixon and the "British Band." Previous to joining Colonel Dixon, Black Hawk had visited the lodge of an old friend, whose son he had adopted and taught to hunt. He was anxious that this youth should go with him and his band to join the British standard, but the father objected on the ground that he was dependent upon his son for game, and, moreover, that he did not wish him to fight against the Americans, who had always treated him kindly. He had agreed to spend the following winter near a white settlement, upon Salt River, one of the tributaries of the Mississippi which enter that stream below the Des Moines, and intended to take his son with him. As Black Hawk was approaching

his village on Rock River, after his campaign on the lakes with Dixon, he observed a smoke rising from a hollow in the bluff of the stream. He went to see who was there. Upon drawing near the fire he discovered a mat stretched, and an old man of sorrowful aspect sitting under it alone, and evidently humbling himself before the Great Spirit by fasting and prayer. It proved to be his old friend, the father of his adopted son. Black Hawk seated himself beside him and inquired what had happened, but received no answer, for indeed he seemed scarcely alive. Being revived by some water, he looked up, recognized the friend of his youth, and in reply to Black Hawk's inquiry said, in a feeble voice:

“Soon after your departure to join the British I descended the river with a small party, to winter at the place I told you the white man had requested me to come to. When I arrived I found a fort built, and the white family that had invited me to come and hunt near them had removed to it. I then paid a visit to the fort, to tell the white people that myself and little band were friendly, and that we wished to hunt in the vicinity of their fort. The war chief, who commanded it, told me that we might hunt on the Illinois side of the Mississippi, and no person would trouble us. That the horse-

men only ranged on the Missouri side, and he had directed them not to cross the river. I was pleased with this assurance of safety, and immediately crossed over and made my winter's camp. Game was plenty; we lived happy and often talked of you. My boy regretted your absence, and the hardships you would have to undergo. We had been here about two moons when my boy went out as usual to hunt. Night came on and he did not return. I was alarmed for his safety and passed a sleepless night. In the morning my old woman went to the other lodges and gave the alarm, and all turned out in pursuit. There being snow on the ground, they soon came upon his track, and after pursuing it some distance found that he was on the trail of a deer that led to the river. They soon came upon the place where he had stood and fired, and found a deer hanging upon the branch of a tree, which had been skinned. But here also were the tracks of white men. They had taken my boy prisoner, their tracks led across the river, and then down toward the fort. My friends followed them, and soon found my boy lying dead. He had been most cruelly murdered. His face was shot to pieces, his body stabbed in several places, and his head scalped. His arms were tied behind him."

The old man ceased his narrative, relapsed into a stupor from which he had been aroused, and in a few minutes expired. Black Hawk remained by his body during the night, and next day buried it upon the peak of the bluff. Shocked at the cruel fate of his adopted son, and deeply touched by the mournful death of his old comrade, he was roused to vengeance against the Americans, and after remaining a few days at the village, and raising a band of braves, prepared for offensive operations upon the frontier.

Having narrated to his band the murder of his adopted son, they began to thirst for blood, and agreed to follow Black Hawk wheresoever he might lead.

Now the winter of Black Hawk's discontent drew on apace, and want came upon him "like an armed man." The Indian agents at Fort Armstrong, seeing the friction between the Indians and the white settlers grow with the latter's craving for the promised land that lay flaunting its waving corn-fields in their longing eyes, recommended the removal of the Indians to the west side of the Mississippi River.

Keokuk was that most unsafe of all leaders, a compromise man, and was in favor of going quietly to the Iowa River. Black Hawk stood firm in his assertion of the right to occupy the

land belonging to his tribe, but the ground was rich, and the prospect was enticing. It was the same old encroachment enacted again, that of might against right.

Spurred on by the counsels of Neopope, the Prophet, the nephew of Black Hawk, an astute and bitterly hostile Indian, Black Hawk was more determined not to move his village. He appealed from one agent to another until he had exhausted all the known means of redress, and finally, under some vague promises, went back to his hunt, only to return in the spring and find the whites had taken entire possession of the Sauk village. Fences were built through his corn-fields, many of his lodges burned, the ornaments on the graves of his dead children had been removed, and this was the insupportable grief and offence to him, as he thought their lonely and hungry spirits roamed around disconsolate among his enemies. This had been the chief village of the Sauks for sixty or seventy years. Tame-ly to submit to ejectment by force would have been considered cowardly.

Black Hawk was not intemperate in drinking, and objected strenuously to the whites bringing whiskey to the Indians, for under its influence they became uncontrollable and murderous, and he saw his braves being thus steadily degraded. Once, before the traders



could dispose of it, he seized, broke a barrel, and wasted the whiskey intended for his people.

Added to these wrongs were acts of personal outrage. He said: "At one time a white man beat one of our women cruelly for pulling a few suckers of corn out of his field to suck when hungry; at another time one of our young men was beat with clubs by the white men for opening a fence which crossed our road to take his horse through. His shoulder-blade was broken, and his body badly bruised, from which he soon after died. . . . The whites were *complaining* at the same time that *we* were *intruding* upon *their* rights."

He was the first American socialist who denied the right of private property in land. He said: "My reason teaches me that *land cannot be sold*. The Great Spirit gave it to his children to live upon, as far as is necessary for their subsistence, as long as they occupy and cultivate the soil; but if they voluntarily leave it, then another people have a right to settle upon it. Nothing can be sold but such things as can be carried away."

With such wide divergence of opinion, and so many causes of mutual irritation, affairs reached a point where some decisive step must be taken to avoid a conflict. Finally the

whites took the matter in their own hands, and to expedite the removal of the band set fire to and burned about forty of the lodges. This and many other barbarities were practised upon the Indians.

In 1829 Black Hawk appealed to Governor Coles and Judge Hill. He said: "I then told them that Quash-qua-me and his party *denied* positively having ever sold my village, and that I had never known them to *lie*. I was determined to keep it in possession. . . . Neither of them could do anything for us, but both evidently appeared very sorry. . . . I learned . . . that our Great Father had exchanged a small strip of the land that was ceded by Quash-qua-me and his party with the Pottowatamies for a portion of their land near Chicago, and that the object of this treaty was to get it back again; that the United States had agreed to give them \$16,000 a year for ever for this small strip of land, it being less than the twentieth part of that taken from our nation for \$1,000 a year. . . .

"Here again I was puzzled to find out how the white people reasoned, and began to doubt whether they had any standard of right or wrong. . . . Our pastimes and sports had been laid aside for the past two years. We were a divided people, forming two parties, Keokuk being at the head of one, willing

to barter our rights merely for the good opinion of the whites, and cowardly enough to desert our village to them. I was at the head of the other. . . . I refused to quit my village. It was here I was born, and here lie the bones of many friends and relations. For this spot I felt a sacred reverence, and never would I consent to leave it."

This moving recital of the destruction of his tribe, who were most of them then "dead at the feet of wrong," was made in his old age, when he had been manacled, imprisoned, exhibited in his humiliation before thousands of triumphant spectators, who viewed him with that most painful of all petty inflictions, an observation which was not sympathy.

From 1827 until 1829 the lands were still claimed, and, in fact, belonged to the Indians. In 1830, as before stated, the band came home from a hunt to find their lands apportioned into private holdings. Black Hawk protested strongly until 1831, and finally agreed to move for \$6,000. This sum was refused, and the old story of the wolf and the lamb was re-enacted. The whites complained that the Indians were interlopers and committed outrages. The Governor promised, in answer to the memorial, to remove the Indians "dead or alive." On May 28, 1831, the Governor wrote to General Gaines that he

could bring his seven hundred militia troops to meet a supposititious Indian invasion of the territory of Illinois ; but brave old General Gaines replied, the next day, that it was not necessary ; he had ordered six companies of United States troops from Jefferson Barracks to Rock Island, and four from Prairie du Chien, and did not deem any greater force necessary.

On the 7th of June, 1831, General Gaines held a council on Rock Island. Black Hawk and his band, in full panoply of war, singing their war-songs, "to show they were not afraid," went to the appointed place, but refused to enter the council-room and occupy it with others not immediately interested in the business of the meeting. In compliance with their demand only a few were allowed to remain with Keokuk and Wapello.

General Gaines opened the council with a speech, in which he urged the band to remove west of the Mississippi. "I replied, 'That we had never sold our country, . . . and we are determined to hold on to our village.'

"The War Chief, apparently angry, rose and said, 'Who is Black? Who is Black Hawk?'

"I responded, 'I am a Sac. My forefather was a Sac, and all the nation call me a Sac. Ask these young men, who have fol-

lowed me in battle, and you will learn who Black Hawk is. Provoke our people to war, and you will learn who Black Hawk is.'"

The council broke up without any definite agreement, but in a letter to General George W. Jones, Mr. Davis said, many years afterward :

" It was in consequence of the council held at Rock Island that Black Hawk went to the west side of the Mississippi. When, in 1832, he returned to the east side of the river, it was regarded as a violation of the agreement of the previous year, and as indicating a purpose to repeat his claim to the village of Rock River. This led to the expedition under Stillman, and that inaugurated the war of 1832. In 1831 the Sauks sent a war party against the Sioux, and this breach of peace they feared would bring upon them punishment by the United States ; such, at least, was then understood to be the cause of their abandonment of their settlement at the lead mines of Dubuque."

This encounter between General Gaines and Black Hawk is a reminder of one in which the general was equally unfortunate in his intercourse with the dignitaries of the Sac nation.

There were, at preconcerted times, several " councils " with the belligerent Indians. The

place of meeting was generally designated by the Indians. Their abundant caution made them agree to the conference only where there was a ready way of escape in case of treachery.

General Gaines arranged a conference with the chiefs and braves of the Allied Indians—the Sauks, Foxes, Iowas, and others, and on this occasion the place designated was at the foot of a rocky eminence in the fastnesses of which the Indians had their braves, squaws, and children. Treachery had been suggested as it was far from the fort, but it was not in General Gaines's dauntless temper to hesitate or retire before taking a personal risk. He therefore not only agreed to the rendezvous, but to inspire confidence he took with him only Lieutenant Davis of his staff, an interpreter named Paquette, and a file of two soldiers. Some of the boys of the tribe and a few of the younger women were sauntering about around the base of the mountain when the general rode in with his escort.

The warriors, decked in war-paint and feathers, scowling and silent, were seated in the tent in a half-circle when the general entered. Their arms were stacked near by. At their head was a dark old woman, shrunken to a mere skeleton, clothed in a white woollen garment, gathered about the

neck, with no sleeves. The difference between her dress and that of other Indian women attracted Mr. Davis's attention, and the majesty of her mien impressed him.

General Gaines began the council in his deliberate, halting manner. One and another of the Indian dignitaries interrupted the speech by a grunt or a remark to his neighbor ; but as the general proceeded to explain that it was necessary for the Indians to move on, that the white men would give them a good territory, but must have the one they now occupied, the old squaw became greatly excited and began speaking with much vehemence, which Paquette, the Sac interpreter, explained as a declaration that the Sauks would die on their own hunting-grounds. The warriors became much excited under the harangue, and the general rose to reply. Showing considerable irritation, he told the interpreter, " Tell her—a—that—a—women — a—were not expected to interfere—a—between—the—a—white and Indian braves. She—a—really—a—must—be—a—silent."

The squaw arose from her seat with an air of great majesty, stretched her skinny arms above her head with a wild gesture and responded, her voice rising cracked and shrill above the angry grunts of the warriors : " Does he call *me* a woman ; does he say /

am to be *silent* in the councils of my people? In these veins runs the blood of the last of the Sauk kings. It is my *right* to speak, who shall prevent me?" The men rose and closed about her, gesticulating angrily, while the interpreter translated the speech to the general. The most inexperienced person now saw that trouble impended, and the whites were far outnumbered by the Indians. The general was a very calm and imperturbable man in moments of great danger. He listened until he had the gist of her speech, then rose with a sweep of his hand to command silence, and said: "Mr. Interpreter, a—tell her—a—that—my mother—was a woman." This revelation of the general's brought grunts of satisfaction from the audience, and the frankness of the statement seemed to mollify the old princess. Mr. Davis said his sympathy for her, in conjunction with the bathos of the oration, made him feel oppressed, and he strolled out of the lodge. Just then a boy that had come with the general's party was toying with a pistol, and it went off. The interpreter rushed out, crying, "Everybody get into the tent; there is going to be trouble;" and the whole party of Indians ran pell-mell toward the mountain, supporting the princess between them. The squaws and children scampered off at once



out of sight. However, after the interpreter had explained for a quarter of an hour, they again re-entered the lodge, but the officers and Indians, throughout the conference, held their arms ready for use. Such a condition of things one would imagine might be productive of great *suaviter in modo* on both sides.

The temper in which Black Hawk retired from the conference induced General Gaines to reconsider his refusal of the militia troops, and he thought it best to impress the Indians with his overwhelming forces, that he might avoid bloodshed. He therefore called upon the Governor of Illinois for the militia. Sixteen hundred mounted men answered the call ; but in the night the whole village crossed the river and raised the white flag, and the forces took possession.

There must have been many dramatic occurrences during this period, and the scene is peopled by the ghostly semblance of the men who have fought and died since that day.

The Rev. Dr. Harsha, of Omaha, said : " General Winfield Scott, when a young man, was stationed at Fort Snelling—at that day perhaps the remotest military outpost in the country. When the Black Hawk War was begun some Illinois militia companies proffered their services. Two lieutenants were sent by Scott to Dixon, Ill., to muster the

new soldiers. One of these lieutenants was a very fascinating young man, of easy manners and affable disposition; the other was equally pleasant but extremely modest. On the morning when the muster was to take place, a tall, gawky, slab-sided, homely young man, dressed in a suit of blue jeans, presented himself to the lieutenants as the captain of the recruits, and was duly sworn in.

"The homely young man was Abraham Lincoln. The bashful lieutenant was he who afterward fired the first gun from Fort Sumter, Major Anderson. The other lieutenant, who administered the oath, was, in after years, the President of the Confederate States, Jefferson Davis."

"Dr. Harsha was in Carter Brothers' book store, in New York City, where he chanced to repeat this story to a friend. An elderly gentleman, who was sitting near by listening, arose and remarked that he was happy to be able to confirm the facts, as he was the chaplain at Fort Snelling at the time, and was fully able to corroborate each statement. A bystander then gave the additional testimony that he had often heard Mr. Lincoln say that the first time that he had ever taken the oath of allegiance to the United States it was administered by Jefferson Davis."

Mr. Davis remembered swearing in some

volunteers, but could not substantiate what seems a probable story.

Goaded by a sense of injury, Black Hawk and his band crossed the river several times, making predatory incursions either upon the friendly Indians or the whites.

Of this General A. C. Dodge wrote: "In 1832 we became associated in the famous Black Hawk War, he (Lieutenant Davis) as lieutenant of infantry, and I as aide-de-camp to General Henry Dodge, commanding the militia of Michigan Territory. I often accepted his invitation to partake of his hospitality, as well as that of General (then Captain) William S. Harney and Colonel Zachary Taylor, who often divided their rations with me, as we volunteers were frequently in want of suitable food.

"The regulars were much better provided for than we volunteers were at that time. They were not only furnished with better rations and more of them, but they had tents, while we had none; and I shall never forget the generous hospitality of Lieutenant Davis, Colonel Zachary Taylor, Captain W. S. Harney, and others of my brave and generous comrades of those days."

In this campaign Lieutenant Davis was thrown with two remarkable men. Colonel Boone, a son of the celebrated Daniel Boone,

and Major Jesse Bean, the courage and integrity of both of whom was above question. They were noted for their thorough knowledge of woodcraft which was of inestimable service to their companions in arms. Of the two Colonel Boone was the superior in the matter of education, and his acquired knowledge was supplemented by a sixth sense—a faculty for finding water. He would often turn off suddenly in another direction from the one in which they had been travelling through the pathless prairies, saying that they would come to water before nightfall, and was never mistaken although this country was totally unknown to him, and the distance of the water from the point of divergence was so great, that one could not have accounted for his wonderful capacity except by supposing that he shared the Kaffir's faculty of smelling water at a distance. In fact he was as unable to tell why he took a particular road as any one else could have been. On being questioned he simply said, the water must be there.

Jesse Bean was a man of a different mould; but though he had not received the educational advantages of Colonel Boone, the exigencies of frontier life and his natural capacity had made up for the deficiency. Lieutenant Davis used often to talk to Major

Bean about the phenomena of nature, and tell him the scientific theory of cause and effect, and received an ample compensation for what he imparted, for Major Bean was a shrewd man and close observer of human nature.

One day, however, Major Bean's faith in the subaltern's learning was seriously shaken. Lieutenant Davis was explaining the laws that governed the solar system, the Major looked doubtful and said: "I did not think, Lieutenant, that you would try to make fun of an old man. As for that story of the earth moving and the stars standing still, I don't believe it, for many a night as I have lain listening for my beaver traps, I have watched one star rise in the East, pass over the sky and set in the West again. No man can convince me that the stars stand still."

## CHAPTER XII.

### FORT GIBSON.

LIEUTENANT DAVIS AND MAJOR BOONE.—ENGAGEMENT AT STILL-MAN'S RUN.—BATTLE OF BAD AXE.—END OF THE BLACK HAWK WAR.

THE watchfulness, capacity, and bravery of these two men contributed largely to the success of the campaign which would otherwise have proved disastrous to them on account of the want of provisions and the inexperience of the troops. It was here that Lieutenant Davis first observed that very few men could live upon animal food alone. This and other hardships compelled Major Boone to establish a camp for the sick at one time, and go on with only such as were more seasoned to deprivation. At one time, of these tried veterans there were only two, besides Lieutenant Davis, in his company who were able, for the necessary hunt, to procure meat for the others, and the horses suffered little less than the men. The Indians of the prairies were a new experience to the frontiersmen who had been accustomed to ambuscades

for their enemies. With these the fight was all on the open plain.

One of the engagements in which Black Hawk's band made a noble fight at this time is told by the chief in his "Autobiography."

Black Hawk, with his women and children, had been starving at Four Lakes. Some of the old people actually died of hunger. He concluded to move his women and children over to an island in the Ouisconsin River. Just as the crossing began, a large body of United States troops attacked the party. He had but fifty warriors, and a part of these were detailed to cross the women and children. About a mile from the river the engagement commenced. The fight continued until Black Hawk thought they had crossed, and were in safety; and it is evident from his account that he expected he and his entire force would be cut to pieces. About dark the United States troops retired, and he said, "I was astonished to find the enemy were not disposed to pursue us." The Indians had fifty men, of whom they lost six, and were hampered with *impedimenta*, in a conflict with four hundred well-armed troops, in which the Sacs were the victors. The engagement was known as "Stillman's Run."

Mr. Davis remarked, after describing this

conflict to a friend from Iowa, that he had never known anything to compare with the gallantry of the Indians on that occasion. Had such a thing been attempted and accomplished by a handful of white men in any part of the world, their fame would have been immortal.

Now the Indian outrages began to be more frequently perpetrated. At one time a child was stolen, and Lieutenant Davis was sent to bring it into the lines. He said the little fellow seemed quite happy with his captors, and with dirt and sunburn was nearly as dark as they were.

At another time a band of friendly Menomonees, almost under the guns of Fort Crawford, were attacked, vanquished, and twenty-five of them slain, and the "British Band" of Sacs and Foxes established themselves upon Rock River with hostile intent.

General Atkinson, on March 7th, with the disposable troops at Jefferson Barracks, went in search of Black Hawk. Lieutenant Davis accompanied the troops.

Of the battle of the Bad Axe, Mr. Davis wrote:

"The second Black Hawk campaign occurred in 1832, and Colonel Taylor, with the greater part of his regiment, joined the army commanded by General Atkinson, and with it



moved from Rock Island up the valley of Rock River, following after Black Hawk, who had gone to make a junction with the Pottowatomie band of the Prophet, a nephew of Black Hawk.

“This was the violation of a treaty he had made with General Gaines in 1831, by which he was required to remove to the west of the Mississippi, relinquishing all claim to the Rock River villages. It was assumed that his purpose in returning to the east side of the river was hostile, and from the defenceless condition of frontier settlers, and the horror of savage atrocity, a great excitement was created, due rather to his fame as a warrior than to the number of his followers.

“If, as he subsequently stated, his design was to go out and live peaceably with his nephew, the Prophet, rather than with the ‘Foxes,’ of whom Keokuk was chief, that design may have been frustrated by the lamentable mistake of some mounted volunteers in hastening forward in pursuit of Black Hawk, who, with his band—men, women, and children—was going up on the south side of Rock River.

“The vanity of the young Indians was inflated by their success at Stillman’s Run, as was shown by some exultant messages, and the sagacious old chief, whatever he may

have previously calculated on, now saw that war was inevitable and immediate. With his band recruited by warriors from the Prophet's band, he crossed the north side of Rock River, and passing through the swamp Koshenong, fled over the prairies west of the Four Lakes toward the Wisconsin River. General Dodge with a battalion of mounted miners pursued and overtook the Indians while crossing the Wisconsin and attacked their rear-guard, which, when the main body had crossed, swam the river and joined in the retreat over the Kickapoo hills toward the Mississippi River. General Atkinson with his whole army continued the pursuit, and after a toilsome march overtook the Indians north of Prairie du Chien, on the bank of the Mississippi River, to the west side of which they were preparing to cross in bark canoes made on the spot. That purpose was foiled by the accidental arrival of a steam-boat with a gun on board. The Indians took cover in a willow marsh, and there, on August 3d, was fought the battle of the 'Bad Axe.' The Indians were defeated, dispersed, and the campaign ended.

"In the meantime General Scott, with troops from the east, took chief command and established his headquarters at Rock Island. Thither General Atkinson went with the regular troops, except that part of the

First Infantry which constituted the garrison of Fort Crawford, with these Colonel Taylor returned to Prairie du Chien.

“After a short time it was reported that the Indians were on an island in the river above the prairie, and Colonel Taylor sent a Lieutenant (Lieutenant Davis) with an appropriate command to explore the island. Unmistakable evidence of their very recent presence was found, and contemporaneously Black Hawk, with the remnant of his band and accompanied by some friendly Winnebagoes, appeared under a white flag on the east bank of the river, and the lieutenant returned with them to the fort, where Colonel Taylor treated them as surrendered hostiles. Their trails were followed through the brush to the west side of the island, where signs of canoes having just been pushed off were discovered. The lieutenant\* and his party recrossed the island to get their boats, and there saw, on the east side of the river, a large collection of Indians under a white flag. On going to the group it proved to be Black Hawk with a portion of his band, with a few Winnebagoes, who said Black Hawk had surrendered to them, and that they wanted to take him to the fort and to see the Indian agent. The lieu-

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\* Lieutenant Davis.

tenant went with the Indians to the fort, reported to Colonel Taylor, among other things, his disbelief of the Winnebago story. The grand old soldier merely replied, ' They want the credit of being friendly and to get a reward, let them have it.' "

Black Hawk was taken with his two sons, and other braves, his nation was scattered, and the prisoners, sixty in number, were sent down to Jefferson Barracks under Lieutenant Davis's care, where they were heavily ironed. The cholera was prevailing at that time at Rock Island, and on the boat two of the captive Indians were seized with it, and suffered intensely. Lieutenant Davis did all he could for them, unavailingly. The sufferers had an oath of friendship, a custom common among the Indians, and they plead with him to put them ashore that they might go to the hunting-grounds together. At the first little settlement their request was granted. Mr. Davis said his heart ached as he saw the friend who was suffering the least supporting the head of his dying companion. He never knew their fate.

Black Hawk sat silent and stolid, the only feeling he exhibited was when the settlers along the shore came on the boat to see him. This Lieutenant Davis prohibited, and in some measure prevented, and by showing the

captives courtesy and by little kindly offices, merited and received from Black Hawk the thanks rendered by that chief in his "Autobiography." He said: "We started to Jefferson Barracks in a steam-boat, under the charge of a young war chief (Lieutenant Davis), who treated us all with much kindness. He is a good and brave young chief, with whose conduct I was much pleased. On our way down we called at Galena, and remained a short time. The people crowded to the boat to see us, but the war chief, would not permit them to enter the apartment where we were, knowing, from what his own feelings would have been if he had been placed in a similar situation, that we did not wish to have a gaping crowd around us."

Martial courtesy to a fallen foe, which has in this day somewhat fallen into desuetude, was then revered as one of the first obligations of an "officer and a gentleman."

So ended the Black Hawk War. It seems a small matter now, but then it stirred the hearts of the whole country.

Perhaps this vague account of Black Hawk's fatal battle for the rights of his nation, seen dimly through the mists of nearly seventy years of time and prejudice which have been wrapped about this unhappy, hunted, and nearly extinct race, is very mixed, and at times

nearly unintelligible ; but with the meagre information culled from rare books now out of print, aided by the memory of the tales Mr. Davis told of his experiences at that time, it is the best that could be done.

The belligerents are overcome, traduced, defrauded, and dead. The man has painted the picture, the lion is not an artist, and his teeth and claws were drawn before he joined the silent majority. The unsuccessful, like the absent, are always wrong.

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**BUST OF JEFFERSON DAVIS.**





## CHAPTER XIII.

### AT LEXINGTON AND GALENA.

GALENA LEAD MINES.—RECRUITING SERVICE.—CHOLERA IN LEXINGTON.—RETURN TO FORT CRAWFORD.—FORT GIBSON.—ADVENTURE WITH INDIANS.—WASHINGTON IRVING AND ELEAZUR WILLIAMS.—NEW REGIMENT CREATED.—PROMOTION.—SMITH T.

AFTER the Black Hawk War closed in 1831 Lieutenant Davis was sent up to Galena on a tour of inspection to the lead mines, where he remained long enough personally to know some of the miners, and they had so many manly qualities that his relations with them were very kind, and his appreciation of them won their regard.

In the autumn of 1832, Lieutenant Davis was sent on recruiting service, and went to Louisville and Lexington, Ky. The cholera broke out while he was at the latter place, and people fled from it in numbers. True to his sense of duty, and fearless in the pursuit of it, he remained at his post, took care of his recruits, attended to their diet, and, as ever, did his best regardless of consequences.

It was there he said he performed his first undertaker's duty, for a poor old negro man who, with a white man, lay dead alone in a "shanty." He found, with much difficulty, a carpenter, who, with Lieutenant Davis's unskilled assistance, made two coffins, took the corpses to the cemetery, and buried them decently.

As soon as Lieutenant Davis secured the necessary number of men he returned with his recruits to Fort Crawford, the regimental head-quarters, and remained there until 1834, when he was ordered to the extreme frontier, which was then Fort Gibson, Iowa Territory. From there he went on an expedition to the Toweash villages, and was constantly engaged in reconnaissances involving many hardships and anxieties, with nights and days spent without food or shelter and drenched with the rain. But these are of no importance at this day to the general public, who travel in Pullman coaches through fields of smiling plenty, and by flourishing villages where law and order permit their happy citizens to lay them down "in peace and sleep," instead of watching over their households in fear of midnight invasions by savages.

Lieutenant Davis was sent off to make a reconnaissance toward the Northwest, to find a detached force of warriors who had been tres-

passing and committing murders, to whom he hoped to give battle. He grew tired of listening to a pow-wow going on between some Indians and whites and wandered off with an Indian who offered to guide him. He took the man up behind him on his horse and they rode off together among the rocks. They had come to one of the cañons of the Rocky Mountains where the cliffs rose like walls on either side, when the Indian, springing down, put his hands to his mouth and uttered a peculiar cry, evidently a signal to some of his friends. Lieutenant Davis, suspecting treachery, drew his pistol and pointed it at the guide. However, the other made signs of peace, and in a little while a rough kind of ladder was let down from one side of the cañon. They clambered up and discovered themselves in a village from which all the strong men had gone down to the pow-wow leaving nobody but the sick, the aged, and the women and children behind them. They had built themselves porch-like contrivances of twigs where they sat during the day. It was just the season when melons were commencing to ripen. They received the stranger kindly, and while he sat under one of these, brought him some melons to eat. He had become so browned by the exposure that his naturally fair skin was as dark almost as

theirs, and excited no attention. But when, the melon-juice running down his sleeve, he turned back his cuff and they discovered the white skin beneath it, the whole village was in excitement in a moment, as none of them had ever seen a white man before. They pulled open his shirt to see if his chest, too, was of this peculiar color, and everybody tumbled up out of wigwam and hut to take a look at this strange creature. However, being savage, their curiosity was well-bred, they troubled him no further, and he and the friendly villagers parted on the most kindly terms, his own Indian guide returning with him to the camp.

When Lieutenant Davis was on an expedition in the neighborhood of Fort Gibson once, he met Washington Irving and also Eleazur Williams, the person who believed himself to be the Dauphin of France.\* His impression of Washington Irving was that he was a most amiable and charming man, lamentably out of place on that frontier, and he suspected Mr. Irving of secretly coinciding with him. Of Mr. Williams he had only one memory, and that was that he looked like a preacher and had a measured cadence in his speech like one.

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\* The original of the once famous article in the *Atlantic Monthly* entitled "Have we a Bourbon among us?"

He said, "If I only had my books here I could read a great deal."

After nearly a year's service at Fort Gibson many of the troops became ill, and as the cause was obscure, it was thought prudent to remove them from the Cherokee to the Creek Nation, and Lieutenant Davis was detailed to superintend the change. He gave the following account of his service in a letter written in 1878:

*From Hon. Jefferson Davis to George W. Jones.*

"In the beginning of 1833 I was one of the two officers selected from the First Infantry for promotion into the newly created regiment of dragoons, and left Prairie du Chien under orders for recruiting service in Kentucky. As soon as the Kentucky company was raised I returned to Jefferson Barracks, the rendezvous of the regiment. The first field officer who joined was Major Mason, he being the other officer who, with me, was selected from the First Infantry for promotion in the dragoons, and by him I was appointed adjutant of the squadron, composed of the first companies which reported. After other companies had joined, the colonel, Henry Dodge, came and assumed command. He had known me when I served on the Upper Mississippi, and by him I was appointed adjutant of the regiment. In

1834 Colonel Dodge, with a selected detachment, was sent by General Leavenworth in pursuit of Indians who had committed depredations on the Upper Red River, and I was one of that party.

"I was stationed opposite Dubuque, charged to keep watch on the semi-hostile Indians west of the river, and to prevent white men from crossing into the Indian country. My orders required me to go frequently through the mines, and thus I was often the recipient of your hospitality at the Sinsinnewa Mound, and frequently in the town of Galena, where my particular associate was the venerable Captain Legate, of the United States Army, on duty as superintendent of the lead mines."

Some misrepresentations having in late years been made of Mr. Davis's Western service, he wrote the following letter to his friend General G. W. Jones:

"BEAUVOIR, September 2, 1882.

"MY DEAR FRIEND: I have received your very gratifying letter of the 27th instant, and also numbers four and twelve of the early history of Dubuque. I have read the letter of ———, contained in number four, with equal surprise and regret. I did not expect him to know that as far back as the administration of

Mr. Monroe the question had been definitely settled that the action of a secretary was that of the President, and to comprehend the peculiar features of the Indian treaty of 1804. . . . It is not true that those who claimed to own the mines as successors of Dubuque were a party to the removal of trespassers; the reverse is the fact, as I well remember, because of a threat which was made that John Smith T.\* was to come with a large party of riflemen to drive off my small party, so as to allow the mines to be worked. You ask why I marked my letter to you 'private.' The reason was that I did not wish to engage in newspaper controversy,

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\* John Smith T. was a noted duellist, had killed nine men outright. His unexpected presence at a little wayside tavern, where he was not recognized, produced an absurd effect. He was considered invincible by the people of the West, his name struck terror into the hearts of the men of that day, and a brave and tried man related an anecdote of how Smith T.'s name affected himself at the inn at Galena. He said the company were sitting on the gallery, talking of Smith T. after dinner, and he said he should like to see him; he thought he could not be terrorized. A quiet little man arose and announced, "I am Smith T., at your service." The man went to the bannister and gave up his dinner, the instinctive terror made him sea-sick. Once General Dodge had a difficulty with Mr. Smith T., and the two exchanged a promise to fight at sight. The general saw Smith T. first at a crossing as he turned the corner in Galena, and his pistol covered Smith T. before he saw the general. Smith T. bowed coolly and said, "This time you have the advantage of me, general, but the next!" and passed on. The old Indian fighter was a match for anyone in the art of defence and offence. The two never met again. The general's eyes flashed as he told it, and he added, "he came *very* near getting me, sir—*very near*!"

and if I wrote anything in regard to Dubuque and the Indian troubles of that period, I preferred that it should be fuller and in a different style from that of friendly correspondence. My connection with the matter was not of sufficient importance to make me anxious to call to it the attention of the public, and I am quite content on that, as in many other things, to permit a petty spite to exclude my name from the narrative. I have, however, always gratefully remembered the resolution of your legislature upon the receipt of the news that I had been mortally wounded at the battle of Buena Vista."



## CHAPTER XIV.

FORT GIBSON, 1834.

THERE was a sergeant-major at Fort Gibson of more than ordinary education and dignity of character who lay in hospital desperately ill and gradually sinking. Mr. Davis had visited him for a while each day, and had a friendly regard for him. When marching orders were received the poor fellow pleaded with his lieutenant to take him, too. Mr. Davis said he could scarcely restrain his tears when he had to tell him that he was too ill to go; but the man begged so hard he had him wrapped up and took him with him. After two or three days' travel the ill man began to improve, and was entirely well before the end of the campaign. It was the *mal de l'hôpital* he had. I insert a letter from him to my husband.

“NAVASOTA, TEX., November 28, 1889.

“HON. JEFFERSON DAVIS, NEW ORLEANS, LA.

“HONORED SIR: Once when there was much sickness prevailing among the First Dragoons at Fort Gibson, and I was very sick in the

hospital, the regiment was ordered, for the benefit of its health, to remove from the Cherokee Nation to the Creek Nation ; but the surgeon refused to allow me to be removed with the regiment. However, you came to my aid, and had me taken to the Creek Nation, where I rapidly recovered. And I hope that your temporary removal from Beauvoir to New Orleans will result in a like benefit to your health ; and that, when the long roll is sounded, you will find yourself in the camp of the Grand Commander.

“You have been my good friend on many occasions, and have shown that your friendship to me and others has not been measured by their rank or the size of their purse. Hoping to hear of your complete restoration to health,

I am,

Your old

“SERGEANT-MAJOR FIRST DRAGOONS.”

The letter had no other signature, but Mr. Davis was very much pleased to hear from him, remembered his name at once, and sent an affectionate answer, and from that time continued to correspond with Mr. Doran until last summer.

The incidents of Lieutenant Davis's service are unfortunately, many of them, dimly recalled by me. He remembered many and de-

lighted in relating them. He endured many hardships and deprivations during this time, being occasionally for one or two weeks confined to buffalo meat, which, he said, became the most distasteful of all food to him. When recounting this experience he used to air his only piece of culinary lore by saying, "No one can make soup without flour; it is simply water." Then he told of how he had tried, and "James had tried, and it was only tea, no matter how much buffalo meat was put in;" so he was firmly convinced that soup was never made without flour.

Sometimes, when game did not come in sight, cold flour was the only food they had. When speaking of these hardships he took occasion to impress upon me the necessity of requiring our children to eat whatever was set before them without attaching importance to it. He said he had observed, while on this campaign, how ill the gourmets fared, and how intensely they suffered from the deprivations consequent upon their long marches through an uninhabited country. He never noticed the viands at our own table, but ate whatever was offered. If there was any defect in the preparation of them, unless it was mentioned, he made no complaint, but sometimes he would answer to our dissatisfaction, "Yes, I think she is the worst cook

in all Ireland." Generally he said, "Take no thought of what ye shall eat. There are so many higher joys than eating." If anything was good he did full justice to it, and commended the cook as entitled to a *cordon bleu*. One of his ways of judging the manners of people was to observe them when the restrictions of society had been removed. Upon my expressing astonishment at his undervaluation of rather an elegant man who had been on that campaign with him, he answered, "You were not at the water-hole when he scooped out two tincups full of clear water and drank it off, leaving the muddy rest for us."

On one of these journeys the water and the grog gave out, so that Lieutenant Davis had to limit the soldiers in both supplies. They suffered intensely from thirst and exhaustion, and he also was much weakened by the hardships of their march; but when the soldiers came to remonstrate against going farther, to where he lay on the ground, resting, but very anxious, and urged him to retrace his steps, while he refused their request, he gave them his own supply of water. The grog he did not use; so they had that also.

"Horace and Hannibal Bonney, twin brothers, who enlisted in the First Dragoons in 1833, marched to Jefferson Barracks, which

was then an outpost on the extreme frontier. After a winter spent there the troops were ordered to Fort Gibson, Ark., and on their arrival were welcomed by a body of five hundred or more Indian warriors in the full glory of their native costumes. At their head rode a man, over six feet in height, dressed all in buckskin, and when Horace Bonney inquired who this white warrior was, with all these red men, he was informed that it was the redoubtable Captain Sam Houston.

“Shortly afterward they were joined by Lieutenant Jefferson Davis. . . . The two brothers frequently scouted over the plains in the young officer’s company, and often had cause to admire his bravery and discretion.”

Lieutenant Davis’s devotion to the service, and his gallant bearing, impressed itself then upon the men about him, both officers and privates. His habits were as good as his methods, and success waited upon the well-chosen means he used. Both friendly and hostile men, who met him in his youth, have invariably borne testimony to his energy, his sobriety, his dauntless bravery, his sound military judgment, and his wide charity.

The first important campaign that the dragoons entered upon was that against the Comanches, who had just made a raid on plant-

ers in that section, carrying off blacks and whites alike. The Comanches were driven off with loss, their prisoners rescued, and, under escort of cavalry, returned to their homes.

Game was about them in all its primitive abundance. "Horace Bonney stated that he had seen one thousand acres of buffalo in a herd at a time, and that the soldiers were never without the tenderest of fried meat, as only young buffalo were killed, and the juiciest of steaks were selected from them."

So swift has been the march of civilization that it is confusing to attempt to recall how lately the Northwest was redeemed from savagery. The buffalo, in 1842, ranged as far west as Independence, and, in 1836, acres of them were visible at a time. A buffalo hide could then be bought, green, for fifty cents; now the animal is nearly extinct. So much more destructive is the civilized man for sport than the savage for necessity.

The past seems very near the present when one is reminded that the St. Genevieve stone, of which the capitol of Iowa is largely built, was quarried from lands which had very little marketable value when granted by the King of Spain to General Henry Dodge's father, Israel C. Dodge. General A. C. Dodge, Henry Dodge's son, remembered Mr. Thomas Hart Benton when he kept a woodyard ten

miles from St. Genevieve, and was much elated at Mr. Benton being elected to the Senate, albeit he did not then know what the office was which he and his father were to hold at the same time from contiguous States. These last three men were some years in the Senate after Mr. Davis entered that body.

General A. C. Dodge also gave a history of the creation of the dragoon regiment to which Lieutenant Davis was promoted for gallant service.

General Dodge said that, "After the Black Hawk War, in which his father bore a distinguished part, Congress ordered the creation of a regiment of dragoons. The first Governor Dodge, was made Colonel; Stephen W. Kearney, Lieutenant-Colonel; R. B. Mason, Major; Jefferson Davis, Adjutant. The general recalls as captains, Edwin V. Sumner, David Hunter, both distinguished in the war against the Confederacy.

"When the First Dragoons arrived atavenport they were met by General Winfield Scott, and the officers were duly presented to their imposing superior. Captain Brown was a good inch taller than the general, and as the latter—almost for the first time in his life—looked *up* to catch Brown's eye, he remarked, with dignified jocularitv, 'Captain,

you outrank me.' " It was Colonel Kearney who had charge of the reconnaissance of the Iowa wilderness, the various " dragoon trails " remembered by old settlers having been made by four companies under his command, of which Lieutenant Davis's was one.



## CHAPTER XV.

RESIGNATION FROM THE ARMY.—MARRIAGE TO MISS TAYLOR.—  
CUBAN VISIT.—WINTER IN WASHINGTON.—PRESIDENT VAN  
BUREN.—RETURN TO BRIERFIELD, 1837.

LIEUTENANT DAVIS's service had been arduous, and from his first day on the frontier until his last, he had always been a candidate for every duty in which he could be of use, and his conduct had been recognized by the promotion accorded to him by his government. The snows of the Northwest had affected his eyes seriously ; his health was somewhat impaired and, naturally domestic in his tastes, he began to look forward longingly to establishing a restful home and to a more quiet life. His engagement to Miss Taylor had now lasted two years, and General Taylor's feelings toward him did not seem to become mollified.

Miss Taylor finally went to her father and told him that she had waited two years, and as, during that time, he had not alleged anything against Lieutenant Davis's character or honor, she would therefore marry him. She had inherited much of her father's decision of

character, and felt the manifest injustice that further delay would inflict on her lover.

A boat arrived from St. Louis, and near the time it was to return Captain McRee, with the knowledge of her family, engaged a state-room and escorted Miss Taylor to it. Colonel Taylor was transacting some regimental business on the boat, and while he was there his daughter made another attempt to reconcile him to her marriage, but all in vain. She sorrowfully gave up hope of winning Colonel Taylor's consent, and went to St. Louis to be married to Lieutenant Davis.

In reference to this reported elopement Mr. Davis wrote: "In 1835 I resigned from the army, and Miss Taylor being then in Kentucky with her aunt—the oldest sister of General Taylor—I went thither and we were married in the house of her aunt, in the presence of General Taylor's two sisters, of his oldest brother, his son-in-law, and many others of the Taylor family." This house is still standing, and was afterward the residence of Colonel William Christy.

The estrangement between Lieutenant Davis and Colonel Taylor was not healed during the life of Mrs. Davis.

Mr. Davis had seen so much of the discomforts of army life to the families of the officers that, when he decided to marry, he also deter-

mined to resign his commission in the army. His resignation was dated June 30, 1835.

After his marriage, Mr. Davis proceeded at once with his bride to visit his family in Mississippi. The first place at which they stopped was "The Hurricane," which, by this time, had become a valuable plantation, with good "quarters" for the negroes and a comfortable dwelling for the owner.

When Mr. Davis looked about him for an occupation by which he could support his family, his brother proposed to give him a certain tract of land called "The Brierfield," in lieu of the interest Mr. Davis had in his father's negroes, which had passed into the service of Joseph E. Davis. This was accepted, and he, with his friend and servant James Pemberton—of whom he spoke in the fragment of his Autobiography given in this memoir—and ten negroes whom he bought with a loan from his brother, went to work on "The Brierfield" tract, so called because of a dense growth of briars which were interlocked over the land. The cane was too thick to be uprooted or cut, and they burned it, and then dug little holes in the ground and put in the cotton-seed, which made an unusually fine crop, and the prices of cotton then rendered it very remunerative.

While he was busily at work the summer

sped on until what is known on the Mississippi River as "the chill-and-fever season" was upon him, and it was thought advisable for the young couple to seek a more healthful place, as they were unacclimated: so they went to visit his sister, Mrs. Luther Smith, at her "Locust Grove" plantation near Bayou Sara, La.

Very soon after their arrival Mr. Davis was taken very ill with malarial fever, and, the day after, Mrs. Davis became ill also. They were both suffering greatly, but he was considered very dangerously ill, and they were nursed in different rooms. He was too ill to be told of her peril, and delirium saved her from anxiety about him. Soon after the fever set in she succumbed to it, and hearing her voice singing loud and clear a favorite song, "Fairy Bells," he struggled up and reached her bedside—to find her dying. The poor young creature drew her last sigh September 15, 1835, and was buried in his sister's family burying-ground. She was represented to me, by members of the Davis family who knew her best, as refined, intelligent, sincere, and very engaging in her manners. Though a woman of great decision of character she was devoid of the least trace of stubbornness; her judgment was mature, her nature open and faithful, and her temper affectionate and re-

sponsive. None of her own relations stood by her early grave, but her husband's family grieved over her with an affectionate sense of their loss and intense sympathy with her bereaved husband. His life was despaired of for a month ; and at last, when able to be lifted in his faithful James's arms, he returned to "The Hurricane." He had become so emaciated and had so serious a cough that it was thought best for him to spend the winter in Havana, whither he went as soon as he was able to travel. He sailed for Havana in the autumn of 1835.

In those days there were no steamships, and the three weeks' sail, with a douche of salt water taken on the deck, in the primitive manner of a bucket of sea-water thrown over him by a sailor, Mr. Davis recuperated enough to enjoy to some extent the soft air and tropical luxuriance of Havana.

There was a serious drawback, however, to his recovery. He had no desire for social intercourse, and his only recreation was to go up on the hills and about the fortifications, to sketch. With clinging memory and affection for his old profession he liked to look at the troops drilling ; but, while engaged in this way, he was informed by one of the city authorities that if he was seen drawing the plan of the fortifications and watching the drill he would

be imprisoned and put on the walls to break stones. "It is known that you are an officer of the United States Army, and if it was not, your bearing and walk proclaim you a soldier." Disclaimers were unavailing ; so even this occupation was denied him.

One day, sick at heart of espionage and irritated into extreme nervousness, he saw a ship making ready for sea, and suddenly decided to sail in her to New York, whither she was bound.

From thence he went to Washington, and was so fortunate as to get in a congressional mess with Mr. Benton, General George Jones, Dr. Lynn, Franklin Pierce, and other prominent men of that day. Of this period General George Jones, of Iowa, wrote thus : "It was in 1838, when I was the last delegate to Congress from the Michigan Territory, that Jefferson Davis reached Washington in the winter and immediately called to see me where I was staying, at Dawson's boarding-house, not more than a hundred yards northeast of the present Senate chamber." Among the prominent men staying at the same house were Senators Thomas H. Benton from Missouri ; his colleague, Dr. Lewis F. Linn ; William Allen, Senator of Ohio ; Franklin Pierce, of New Hampshire, and forty or fifty others.

“ I introduced Lieutenant Davis to my friends. He was then on his way to his home in Mississippi from Havana, whither he had gone for his health. He soon won the high esteem and respect of the foremost men in the national capital.

“ He was my guest when I seconded Jonathan Cilley, of Maine, in the great duel with William J. Graves, of Kentucky, in which Cilley was killed.

“ On one occasion, that winter, Davis and I accompanied Dr. Linn, the Senator from Missouri, and Senator Allen, of Ohio, to a reception given by the Secretary of War. Dr. Linn and I returned home, leaving Senator Allen and Davis to return with John J. Crittenden, of Kentucky, at Crittenden's request. After Dr. Linn and I got to bed, we heard the voice of Allen at a distance. He and Davis soon entered our room.

“ Mr. Davis was bleeding profusely from a deep cut in his head, and the blood was streaming down over his face, and upon his white tie, shirt-front, and white waistcoat.

“ Mr. Allen, who had been drinking champagne freely, was somewhat intoxicated, and missing the bridge (Mr. Allen being supposed to be familiar with the road) Davis had followed him, and they had both fallen into the Tiber, a small stream which they had to cross.

Allen had alighted on his feet, but Mr. Davis, who was perfectly sober, had endeavored to save himself, and had pitched head foremost into the creek and cut his head badly. He was covered with blood, and his clothes were drenched with water and stained with mud. He was on the verge of fainting from the loss of blood when Dr. Linn and myself applied the proper restoratives. In the morning I went to his room and found him again unconscious. I informed Dr. Linn of his condition, and after several hours' hard work we restored him to consciousness. Dr. Linn remarked that he would have been dead had I been five minutes later in reaching him the morning after the accident."

In that day the culvert was not wider than the avenue, and, even in 1845, the sidewalk had no pavement. The boards laid across had no handrail or other guide: so quickly has Washington sprung into a large, bustling, and well-ordered City! Then, the mall began in the first square below the Capitol grounds, and stretched for half a mile to the east, a grassy common, marshy, and at times well-nigh impassable, a part of which was subsequently occupied by the Botanical Garden. In this latter there was no effort at decoration, but it was simply a garden for acclimatizing foreign plants for utilitarian purposes.



While in Washington Mr. Davis paid a visit to the President, and was introduced by the Hon. Franklin Pierce. Mr. Van Buren came in to them, *soigné*, astute, and apparently confiding as a boy; but when one tried to remember his confidences they were either utterances about persons who had become, he felt sure, irreconcilable with him, or were in declared and open hostility. Of the future he did not speak. Then the famous tabourets, called by the Congressional critic "tabby cats," were gay with their covering of glazed white chintz and pink roses. The adornments of the Executive Mansion were very simple; but the President's refined taste had interspersed old-fashioned bowls and vases of roses throughout the drawing-rooms. After a half-hour's interview the President invited Mr. Davis to breakfast. He went at the appointed time, and the President paid him special attention and talked to him of the army, of general politics, and many more subjects which derived interest from Mr. Van Buren's rich stores of memory and graceful deference of manner. In the midst of a serious conversation after breakfast he looked at Mr. Davis, whose handsome arched feet were at their best in a pair of New Orleans shoes, and said, "Where did you get your shoes, may I ask? I had a pair like that made in France, but

have never seen that stitch since." Mr. Davis told him that he had the shoes made in New Orleans. Of course he liked his shoes all the better for the President's notice of them. This attention to details—personal and governmental—wise reticence, and perfect breeding was probably the source of much of Mr. Van Buren's success.

In the spring Mr. Davis's health was sufficiently recuperated for him to return home, and once more pick up the threads of his life, which had "floated wide" after the death of his young wife.

## CHAPTER XVI.

HURRICANE AND BRIERFIELD, 1837-45.

JOSEPH E. DAVIS.—TREATMENT OF SLAVES.—LIFE AT HURRICANE  
AND BRIERFIELD.

DURING the eight years after this period Mr. Davis rarely left home, and never willingly. Sometimes a year would elapse without his leaving his plantation.

Intercourse with his brother Joseph was well calculated to improve and enlarge the mind of the younger brother. Joseph Davis was a man of great versatility of mind, a student of governmental law, and took an intense interest in the movements of the great political parties of the day. He gave an independent assent to the course of the one which suited his view of right. He, like his brother Jefferson, could not comprehend any one differing from him in political policy after hearing the reasons on which his opinion was based, and was prone to suspect insincerity on the part of the dissenter. But, unless offered a rudeness he was habitually mild, though keenly, yet good-humoredly, satirical, pointing his arguments usually with some

homely anecdotes which generally turned the laugh on his opponent.

He had quite a collection of standard works, upon the formative period of our government, among which "The Constitution," "The Federalist," "Elliott's Debates," etc., filled a conspicuous place. These were read and almost committed to memory. The Resolutions of '98 and '99, were always quoted when the argument became hot, and no one questioned the authority cited. Once a witty man, fagged out by the weight of authority pressed upon him, objected to having everything he said controverted by "offensive books." The brothers considered the Constitution a sacred compact, by which a number of sovereigns agreed to hold their possessions in common under strict limitations; and that, as in any other partnership or business agreement, it was not to be tampered with or evaded without the sacrifice of honor and good faith.

The brothers occupied their evenings with conversations on grave subjects, and during the day they found abundant occupation attending to their plantations. Jefferson was an unusually observant and successful planter, and gave great care to the details of cultivating cotton. This unremitting attention to his affairs bore much fruit, and his cattle and

crops had yielded him what used, in our young days, to be considered a moderately large fortune. Mr. J. E. Davis and his family generally went North for the summer, and then Mr. Davis was in charge of both places, and the only companions he had during their absence were the men employed about the gin and negro houses. They were an endless source of amusement to him, though he had an unaffected sympathy with them in their sorrows.

He had a lank, yellow-haired old millwright, who with his young son was working upon his cotton-gin. Mr. Davis found him an original person, and talked very often with the pair. Mr. P. had seen Mr. Davis from time to time very much absorbed in Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," and one day requested the loan of it, which was granted. He sat mystified but silent, turning the leaves in a dazed way, while his long legs, clothed in white linsey trousers, were wound around each other. His son, Henry, a young fac-simile of his father, entered and inquired what he was reading. On being told he asked, "Father, do you think that is as interesting as 'Charlot-t-e Temple,' or 'Lou-i-i-sy, the Lovely Orphing?'" An allusion to this anecdote would always provoke Mr. Davis to a smile.

This same good old man was once greatly

distressed because his wife had cancer and he could not send her to a specialist in Louisville. After going over with him anxiously the *pros* and *cons* of the case, Mr. Davis gave him \$500, and told him, "Save your wife, and the knowledge that you have done so will satisfy your debt to me."

When he looked after his own plantation there was no need of force with any of his laborers; they did their best for him, and the good feeling and exchanges of kindness were mutual.

Both the brothers abhorred centralization, and believed that a republic could be permanent and successful only when the widest community independence was secured.

A maxim of Joseph E. Davis was, "The less people are governed, the more submissive they will be to control." This idea he carried out with his family and with his slaves. He instituted trial by jury of their peers, and taught them the legal form of holding it. His only share in the jurisdiction was the pardoning power. When his slave could do better for himself than by daily labor he was at liberty to do so, giving either in money or other equivalent the worth of the ordinary field service. One of his slaves kept a variety shop, and on many occasions the family bought of him at his own prices. He shipped,

and indeed sometimes purchased, the fruit crops of the Davis families, and also of other people in "The Bend;" and, in one instance, credited one of us with \$2,000 on his account. The bills were presented by him with promptitude and paid, as were those of others on an independent footing, without delay. He many times borrowed from his master, but was equally as exact in his dealings with his creditors. His sons, Thornton and Isaiah, first learned to work, and then were carefully taught by their father to read, write, and cipher, and now Ben Montgomery's sons are both responsible men of property; one is in business in Vicksburg, and the other is a thriving farmer in the West.

A letter from Isaiah is given in another part of this memoir.

After the war the Montgomery family purchased our two plantations, "The Hurricane" and "The Brierfield," and the preference was given to them over a Northern man, well endorsed, who offered \$300,000 for the property. When on one occasion the negroes could not pay their note when it fell due—the amount of the note was \$25,000—Mr. Joseph E. Davis tore it up and told them to go on and pay the rest of the debt.

Corporal punishment was not permitted on "The Brierfield," and was never inflicted ex-

cept upon conviction of the culprit by a jury of his peers. The sentence was, even then, more often remitted than carried out. There was an absurd case occurred which showed the fallibility of the jury. A fine hog had been killed, and it was traced to a negro's house, who was a great glutton. Several of the witnesses swore to a number of accessories to the theft. At last the first man asked a private interview with his master, and in a confidential tone said: "The fact of the matter is, master, they are all tellin' lies; I had nobody at all, sir, to hope (help) me; I killed the shote myself, and eat pretty near the whole of it, and dat's why I was so sick last week." Mr. Davis's sense of humor saved the thief, and he went off to his quarters with only a caution; but the jury were much scandalized at master's breaking up "dat Cote, for, 'fore God, we'd a cotch de whole tuckin' of 'em if he had let we alone."

The James Pemberton of whom Mr. Davis spoke in the first chapter of his "Autobiography," took charge of Brierfield, and managed the negroes according to his master's and his own views. They were devoted friends, and always observed the utmost ceremony and politeness in their intercourse, and at parting a cigar was always presented by Mr. Davis to him. James never sat down



without being asked, and his master always invited him to be seated, and sometimes fetched him a chair. James was a dignified quiet man, of fine manly appearance, very silent, but what he said was always to the point. His death, which occurred from pneumonia in 1850, during our absence, was a sore grief to us, and his place was never filled.

Once, when something quite disastrous had happened on the place, Mr. Davis asked, "How do you think it happened, James?" James responded, "I rather think from my neglect." Inquiry was made of Mr. Davis why he called him James. He said, "It is disrespect to give a nickname." From this fine appreciation of the rights of others he would not permit the names of the negroes on the plantation list of "hands" to be abbreviated, and insisted that the negroes should be called what they chose.

His patience under personal inconvenience was remarkable. He called it "toughing it out." Once, when he was keeping house before his marriage, he took a little mulatto woman to cook for him, because she insisted on coming. The breakfast was forgotten, and he drank milk; but when six o'clock passed and no dinner was ready, he mildly told her, "Do not trouble yourself; just give over trying to-night and catch up for

breakfast." The little woman, some years afterward, when telling me of it, had tears in her eyes, and said, "Master did me mighty mean that time; he orter cussed me, but it was mean to make fun of me."

His sense of humor was keen; he was a close observer of everything. Every shade of feeling that crossed the minds of those about him was noticed, and he could not bear anyone to be inimical to him. Nothing could be more winning than his efforts to conciliate even his servants when he thought they were annoyed with him, and he had his reward, for to a man they loved him, and were willing to bear any little impatience on his part cheerfully. He had one remarkable and invariable custom. No matter who told him anything about his negroes, he said, "I will ask him to give me his account of it." The servant was always heard in his own defence. Mr. Davis said, "How can I know whether he was misunderstood, or meant well and awkwardly expressed himself."

Whenever he went to the quarters the twelve or fifteen little toddlers that could walk would run from the plantation nursery calling out "Howdye, massa," and stretch out their short arms for a handshake sometimes, in imminent danger of the horse treading upon them.

The corn-crib was never locked, and from this the negroes fed their chickens and sold them to us at the market price; shelled as much as would do them for a week, and ground their own and the supply of meal for the white family on Saturday afternoon. Around their houses they each had a few peach-trees, their chicken-houses, and near by, a "sweet potato patch," for their exclusive use.

At the death of one of the negroes his or her family had a regular tariff, which was enforced after the manner of Mr. Calhoun's sliding-scale of duties. A large quantity of flour, several pounds of sugar, the same quantity of coffee, a ham, a "shote," and half a dozen or a dozen bottles of claret constituted the supper on which they felt they could be wakeful and watch the corpse; for a baby it was less; for a bride more, with a wedding-dress added thereto, and these requests were never denied them. The ceremonies were always furnished by us in case of a death. In case of illness, if chicken-soup was needed we bought the chicken from the family of the sufferer, and the money for it was always demanded.

Mr. Davis had one old man who was a "driver" in General Washington's time.\*

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\* A driver on a plantation means a trusty person who superintends the laborers. In the period of Mr. Davis's imprisonment his care for the comfort of this old man oppressed him dreadfully, as

He could neither read nor write, but Uncle Rob's memory was entirely accurate and always ready to answer his summons, and his word was unimpeachable. He was eloquent in prayer, faithful in all things, and fit to be, as he was, a shepherd of his people. He and his old wife had comfortable quarters; he had a quiet horse, and used to ride over Brierfield every day, and at the end of a nine months' session of Congress he could, with the utmost accuracy, tell the course of events on the place during our absence.

As I look now upon the change in the *personnel* of some of the free negroes, their often declared hostility and armed neutrality toward the whites, I revert with regret to the days when "love was law" with them; when we nursed their children and they ours, and there was entire mutual confidence.

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will be seen by the extracts from his letters published in another part of this volume.

## CHAPTER XVII.

BEGINS HIS POLITICAL LIFE, 1843.

CANVASS AS ELECTOR FOR POLK AND DALLAS.

"IN 1843," said Mr. Davis, in a brief autobiographical sketch, dictated to a friend during the last month of his life, for a new Biographical Cyclopædia, "I, for the first time, took part in the political life of the country. Next year I was chosen one of the Presidential electors at large of the State, and in the succeeding year was elected to Congress, taking my seat in the House of Representatives in December, 1845. The proposition to terminate the joint occupancy of Oregon and the reformation of the tariff were the two questions arousing most public attention at that time, and I took an active part in the discussion, especially in that of the first. During this period hostilities with Mexico commenced, and in the legislation which that conflict rendered necessary, my military education enabled me to take a somewhat prominent part."

In this brief sketch Mr. Davis did not

deem it necessary to state what part he took in politics in 1843. In that year he was urged to become a candidate of the Democratic, or States' Rights party, for the State legislature, as the representative of Warren County, and with the expressed expectation of leading a forlorn hope. In a private memorandum Mr. Davis thus describes this, his first political campaign.

"The canvass had advanced to a period within one week of the election, when the Democrats became dissatisfied with their candidate and resolved to withdraw him, and I was requested to take his place. The Whigs had a decided majority in the county, and there were two Whig candidates against the one Democrat. When I was announced one of the Whig candidates withdrew, which seemed to make my defeat certain; so, at least, I regarded it. Our opponents must have thought otherwise, for they put into the field for the canvass, though himself not a candidate, the greatest popular orator of the State—it is not too much to say the greatest of his day—S. S. Prentiss; and my first public speech was made in opposition to him. This led to an incident perhaps worthy of mention.

"An arrangement was made by our respective parties for a debate between Mr.

Prentiss and myself on the day of election, each party to be allowed fifteen minutes alternately.

“ Before the day appointed I met Mr. Prentiss, to agree upon the questions to be discussed, eliminating all those with regard to which there was no difference between us, although they might be involved in the canvass.

“ Among these was one which had already been decided by the Legislature of Mississippi, and had thus become in some measure a historical question, but which was still the subject of political discussion, namely, that of repudiation. On this question there were but slight differences between us. He held that the Union Bank bonds constituted a debt of the State. I believed that they were instituted unconstitutionally, but as the fundamental law of the State authorized it to be sued, the question of debt or no debt was to be determined by the courts ; and if the bonds should be adjudged a debt, I was in favor of paying them. As, therefore, we were agreed with regard to the principle that the State might create a debt, and that in such case the people are bound to pay it, there was no such difference between us as to require a discussion of the so-called question of repudiation, which turned upon the assumption that a

State could not create a debt, or, in the phraseology of the period, that one generation could not impose such obligations upon another.

“There was another set of obligations known as the Planters’ Bank bonds, the legality of which I never doubted, and for which I thought the legislature was bound to make timely provision.

“To return to the incident spoken of. Mr. Prentiss and I met at the court-house on the day of the election, improvised a stand at the foot of the stairs up which the voters were passed to the polling-room, and there spent the day in discussion. There was but one variation from the terms originally agreed upon. Mr. Prentiss having said that he could not always condense his argument so fully as to state his position within fifteen minutes, I consented that the time should be extended, provided he would strictly confine himself to the point at issue. He adhered tenaciously to the limitation thus imposed, argued closely and powerfully, and impressed me with his capacity for analysis and logical induction more deeply than by any other effort that I ever knew him to make.”

A young man who was present at a part of this debate told me it was a most striking scene. Mr. Prentiss was small and lame, but



his glorious head once seen made one forget that he had any infirmity. He lisped slightly, or rather had a soft pronunciation of his s, which gave a tender tone to his eloquent denunciation. When the mental duel began each man was given a round of applause. At every successful point made by the one party or the other, the respective adherents shouted and congratulated each other. "At last," said my informant, "the colonel made a fine point, and I ran for my brother a block off. When we got back, the Whigs were shouting for Prentiss, and I was dreadfully cut up." It would seem that if ever a man could be stimulated to the highest effort, such an affectionate and intimate following, aided by such generous applause, would bring out all there was in him. Mr. Davis continued:

"The result of the election, as anticipated, was my defeat.\* As this was the only occa-

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\* Referring to this period a writer in the *New Orleans Times-Democrat* says truly: "Not only was it Mr. Davis's first appearance in the political arena, as a candidate for the legislature, subsequent to the reproduction of the bonds, but he never at any time, before or afterward, held any civil office—legislative, executive, or judicial—in the State government. Furthermore, that his supposed sympathy with the advocates of the payment of the debt by the State was actually (although ineffectually) employed among the repudiators as an objection to his election to Congress in 1845. The idea of attaching any share of the responsibility to him for the repudiation of the bonds was of later origin." In his latter years he felt and sometimes expressed strong indignation at the remark of General Scott in his "Autobiography" (vol. i., page 148), relative to "the Missis-

sion on which I was ever a candidate for the legislature of Mississippi, it may be seen how unfounded was the allegation that attributed to me any part in the legislative enactment known as the 'Act of Repudiation.' "

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issippi bonds, repudiated mainly by Mr. Jefferson Davis." He spoke in terms of still severer censure of the late Robert J. Walker, who had been sent by the United States Government to propagate the same calumny, while their financial agent in Europe during the war, although Mr. Walker was personally familiar with all the facts of the transaction, and was himself Senator from Mississippi at the time.

In the summer of the same year (1844) Mr. Davis was a delegate to the Democratic State Convention which assembled at Jackson to organize the gubernatorial canvass and to appoint delegates to the National Convention.

Here he made his first conspicuous appearance as a coming leader in the party. Van Buren was the choice of the majority. A motion was made to instruct the delegates to support Mr. Van Buren in the Convention as long as there was any reasonable prospect of his selection. Mr. Davis offered an amendment instructing them to support John C. Calhoun as their second choice. In advocating this amendment he eulogized Mr. Calhoun and his principles in a speech of such force and eloquence that he was unanimously chosen an elector.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

MARRIAGE, 1845.

My father, W. B. Howell, lived in a large old-fashioned house called "The Briers," on a "bluff" \* near Natchez, Miss. The ground sloped on each side, on the west to a "dry bayou" about one hundred feet or more deep, the sides of which were covered with pines, oaks, and magnolia trees. On the west there were deep caving bayous, washed in the yellow clay by the drainage to the river bank, about one-eighth of a mile from us.

Mr. Joseph E. Davis came to see the family when I was sixteen, and urged my mother to let me go to him for a visit. After much insistence the request was accorded; but as I was reading hard then to finish my course of English and Latin classics, it was not until the next year that the visit was made.

In those days the only mode of communication was by boat, or by going to Vicksburg and driving thirty-six miles back down stream.

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\* A high clay hill that rises above the river level is so called on the Mississippi.

Therefore, under the care of our life-long and intimate friend, Judge George Winchester, of Salem, Mass., a jurist of renown in Mississippi, we took the old Magnolia steam-boat, the week before Christmas, 1843, and went up to the Diamond Place, the home of Mrs. David McCaleb, the eldest daughter of Mr. Joseph E. Davis, whose plantation is thirteen miles north of "The Hurricane."

The steam-boats at that time were literally floating palaces of ease and luxury. They were much larger then than now, and I have never seen any hotel where the food was so exquisitely prepared or the provision of dainties so great. Fresh fruits and the most beautiful flowers were sent to the captain at almost every stopping-place by the planters and their families, to whom "the boat" meant ice, new books, and every other luxury New Orleans could furnish or their purses command. A journey on one of these packets was an ideal mode of travel.

I hope I may be excused for paying here a passing tribute to Judge Winchester, a saintly man, to whom I owe the little learning I have acquired, and also the realization of my childish ideal of "Great-heart." He was an eminent lawyer, an incorruptible jurist, a strong thinker, and a devoted, self-sacrificing, faithful friend. His charity was as

wide as his horizon. He taught me for twelve years gratuitously, and in the hard methods that a learned man is apt to adopt who has no experience in the art of pedagogics. During that period the most valuable lessons I learned were not from the Latin or English classics—in the former of which he was a proficient scholar, and remembered them well because he loved them—but from the pure, high standard of right of which his course was the exemplar. His politics, like my father's, were what was then called Whig, as, indeed, were those of most of the gentlemanly folk of Natchez. Everybody took the *National Intelligencer*, then edited by Messrs. Gales & Seaton, who were men of sterling honesty, with strong Federal views. They held Mr. Van Buren's name and fame as anathema. They believed all they published, and, as a consequence, the Whigs believed them. In every argument the statements of the *National Intelligencer* were of frequent reference, and as to facts, accepted by both sides. These papers gave, in stately periods, the six weeks' old news from the "under world," and, as they were English, London was often the theme. We knew then more about Lord Brougham than about the Czar of Russia, more of the Duke of Wellington than of Bonaparte. General Jackson had removed the

Treasury deposits from the national banks, thereby ruining half the people of the South ; and this added to the detestation felt by " the best people " for the Democratic principles and theories. Texas was not yet admitted into the Union, and the poor fellows who were ruined by their speculating proclivities had gone there by the thousand to wipe off the long score against them and begin anew. Albert Sidney Johnston had been, as far back as 1840, Secretary of War of the new republic. Then, as they did ever afterward, the hearts of the people trusted in him.

The Whig ladies, many of them, had what were called " sub-Treasury brooches "—small shell cameo-pins on which was carved a strong box with immense locks, and a little blood-hound chained to the lock and lying on watch. The Whig children were told, " Martin Van Buren wants to set these dogs on your family." However, I have strayed far afield and must return to the subject of these memoirs.

Mr. Davis, on his way to a preliminary caucus at Vicksburg, his first essay in political life, came by the Diamond Place on horseback, *en route*. He brought a message from his brother that he would expect me at once. The next day Miss Mary Bradford, Mr. Davis's niece, afterward Mrs. Richard Brodhead, of Pennsylvania, came up on horseback, ac-

accompanied by a servant-man leading a horse with a lady's side-saddle. The old-fashioned high swung carriage and pair came also to bring my *impedimenta*, and "all in the blue unclouded weather" we rode over the rustling leaves through the thick trees to "The Hurricane."

Mr. Davis was then thirty-six years old, and looked about thirty; erect, well-proportioned, and active as a boy. He rode with more grace than any man I have ever seen, and gave one the impression of being incapable either of being unseated or fatigued. From an old letter to my mother I quote my first impressions of him:

"To-day Uncle Joe sent, by his younger brother (did you know he had one?), an urgent invitation to me to go at once to 'The Hurricane.' I do not know whether this Mr. Jefferson Davis is young or old. He looks both at times; but I believe he is old, for from what I hear he is only two years younger than you are. He impresses me as a remarkable kind of man, but of uncertain temper, and has a way of taking for granted that everybody agrees with him when he expresses an opinion, which offends me; yet he is most agreeable and has a peculiarly sweet voice and a winning manner of asserting himself. The fact is, he is the kind of person I should

expect to rescue one from a mad dog at any risk, but to insist upon a stoical indifference to the fright afterward. I do not think I shall ever like him as I do his brother Joe. Would you believe it, he is refined and cultivated, and yet he is a Democrat !”

So wrote this little miss of seventeen of the future hero and statesman !

“The Hurricane” house stood in many acres of splendid oaks, and the main part of the building had low ceilings ; a wide hall with four rooms on the lower floor, as many on the second story, and the same number in the attic. The windows were small, the walls were thick, and the doors were panelled below, and had six small panes of glass above. On the right-hand side of the hall were the drawing-room and the “tea-room,” where the ladies sat ; on the other, was a bedchamber and the “office.” There the brothers sat when they were not riding over their plantations, and talked of books, of elementary law, of agricultural experiments, commented upon the day’s doings, and made and perfected theories about everything in heaven and on earth.

Mr. Jefferson Davis read aloud to his brother the Congressional debates, and often when his eyes were tired one of the ladies was summoned to finish the speech under consid-



eration. While I was there I often took my turn, and greatly enjoyed their comments. The house was surrounded by wide galleries that ran nearly all around it, upstairs and down. Below, the floor was paved with bricks, which were reddened industriously. To the west was a large annex of two rooms forty-three feet long and twenty-five wide. The lower one was a dining-room, paved also and cemented. The upper one was arched and called the "music-room," where the young people sang and played, acted charades, gave mock concerts, and improvised games, while the family portraits looked stolidly down upon our antics.

There was a little store-room adjoining Mr. Davis's bedroom below stairs, out of which came, in the most astonishing and unexpected variety, candy, negro shoes, field implements, new saddles and bridles, fancy plaid linsey or calico dresses for the negro women who needed consolation for a death in their families; guns and ammunition for hunting, pocket-knives, nails, and screws. This little closet was an ark, of which Mr. J. E. Davis kept the key, and made provision for the accidental needs of "each one after his kind." At the back of the house was an immense garden of rare roses and shrubs, flanked by eight acres of peaches, figs, and apples.

On the east side of the house was a very large barn and stable, in which thirty stalls contained horses—a part for the use of the family and the guests, and the rest for the brood horses owned by the brothers. The riding-horses were fast rackers, broken with care and ridden enough by the stablemen and the innumerable guests to make them gentle. Here was Highland Henry, a large red bay, that glowed golden in the sun; his lean head and popped eyes, as he craned his neck over the fence, always commanded the admiration of the lovers of horses and elicited a cake from the ladies of the house. He was both fast and strong, but, his eyes having failed, his former owners had withdrawn him from the turf, after he had won several races, and sold him. Black Oliver, a Canadian horse that had also won several races, went like the wind, and he stretched out so in running that he came alarmingly near the ground; he was the sire of the then-renowned Davis pacing stock. One of these was taken from our plantation when the Federals were in possession and given to General Grant, who said he was the best horse in his stable. There was the gray Medley, an iron-gray horse, coarser than the other two, strong-limbed and of wonderful muscle, but of most vicious temper; and a wild horse from the plains

west of the Rocky Mountains, dun-colored, with black legs, mane, and tail. He had a certain rolling of the eyes, and a free, airy motion of the head and neck that gave a suggestion of a deer, and was very noticeable. All his colts had the same carriage, united to a wonderful amount of endurance.

Both the brothers were good and fearless horsemen, and they were pitiful to their beasts, and talked of them in the most affectionate tones; they often gave them to friends, but never sold one. It was the gray Medley which gave rise to my husband's constant expression about tergiversating politicians. The gray Medley's groom was a dwarfish, odd, little negro called Randall; he had been very often warned about the temper of the horse, but grew careless, approached too close to him, and at last was mortally injured. Mr. J. E. Davis was leaning over the poor fellow, much distressed, when Randall sighed out, "It is in the breed of them gray Medleys, you never kin trust 'em," and died. From that time, when Mr. Davis distrusted a man he said, "He is a gray Medley, and it's in the breed of them."

While engaged in these quiet and varied pursuits Mr. Davis was called to run, in the autumn of 1843-44, as a forlorn hope for the legislature from Warren County, knowing

that the county was Whig by a large majority, and that he could not be elected. He was defeated, of course, but decreased the Whig vote considerably. Next year, 1844, he was nominated elector for Polk and Dallas, and went out on an active campaign. At that period it was a general canvass, as the State had not been districted, and there was no railway throughout the length of it, except a short road from Vicksburg to Jackson, and six miles of unused track from Natchez to the little town of Washington, which General John Anthony Quitman had been instrumental in having laid down. The majority of travellers went by stage-coaches, and these made only one weekly trip, so that the candidates for office either bought a carriage and horse, or horses, but more often the former, and drove by easy stages from place to place, or rode on horseback with an old-fashioned pair of leather saddle-bags strapped on behind the saddle, stopping at such gentlemen's houses as were on the road, where they were hospitably received and entertained, and where the offer of remuneration would have been considered an insult. The negro servants might be amply feed, but not the masters.

Mr. Davis told me an amusing anecdote of one of these visits. He was driving, that

summer, a handsome pair of roached ponies, that were full brothers, almost exactly alike. In the morning he asked for a match. The negro said, "They are eatin' their breakfests, sir." He repeated his request for a match, and the negro brought round the horses, by which he found they had been called "The Match," by the stable-boy.

If the house happened to be near the place of "the speaking," then the household joined the cavalcade and went in to hear it. Not unfrequently three or four candidates travelled together, and very often the opponents accompanied each other to the combat. There was one candidate for a minor office who had a remarkable memory, and the power of exact yet graceful mimicry developed to a wonderful degree. On several occasions he took the place of men who were indisposed, with whom he was travelling, and, *verbatim*, repeated their speeches in exactly the manner and phrase, and he was a good-looking, sensible, friendly mimic. He did this for Mr. Davis once, amid the plaudits of the crowd, and one of the old countrymen told him, "Ef you had a looked like Jeff Davis you'd a been perfec, but thar's whar the crowd got you."

Before Mr. Davis's departure for the canvass of 1844, in January, we became engaged,

and early in February I returned home. He followed within a week, and after a short visit addressed himself to the work he had undertaken. Riding in the sun, and late in the dew, in midsummer, always gave him malarial fever. So these journeys were generally succeeded by long attacks of illness, and the fever affected his eyes greatly; finally, they brought on an attack of amaurosis, and impaired the sight of one. When he came to Woodville in this canvass he found that his mother lay dead in his sister's house. He was much overcome by her death, and after the funeral rode forty miles to see me for an hour in Natchez; and, taking a fresh horse returned to Woodville and kept his appointment to speak there that night, having ridden the greater part of the night previous. His mind dominated his body in so great a degree that he was able to endure nearly what he pleased.

The suddenness with which my husband sprang at once into the political arena, and found his adherents ready armed to co-operate with or follow him, has often been a matter of surprise. Perhaps it was the years of continuous study and calm comparison of opinions with a wise and prudent man like his elder brother, which gave him the certainty of thought that

led to the fluency that flows from it. He used to say that there was an instinct among human beings which recognized any mask—"be it ever so natural"—and if ever a man was "rooted and grounded" in his political faith my husband was. I told him once I should not go to hear him again, for he talked "on the stand" as he did at home. Though no man was less open to the accusation of saying all he believed, he sincerely thought all he said, and, moreover, could not understand any other man coming to a different conclusion after his premises were stated. It was this sincerity of opinion which sometimes gave him the manner to which his opponents objected as domineering.

After the canvass for Mr. Polk had closed with his election, in the spring of 1845, Mr. Davis came down to Natchez for his wedding. On the steam-boat he met General Zachary Taylor for the first time since he left Prairie du Chien, and the general approached him most cordially. An entire reconciliation took the place of the unexpressed but friendly regard which had never ceased to exist in all those years of mutual grief and separation. I had been quite ill, and could not then undertake the ceremony; but some three weeks afterward he came on a short visit, and we concluded to marry then.

On February 26, 1845, at "The Briers," in the presence of my family and some of his, we were married. The Reverend David Page, of Trinity, the pastor of the Episcopal church of Natchez, performed the ceremony. After a breakfast to our friends, we left on a tour of visits to his family at Bayou Sara and Woodville, and from thence to New Orleans.\*

On our visit to Woodville I was introduced to Mr. Davis's mother, who, though she could not leave her chair, and had attained her eighty-fifth year, was still fair to look upon. Her eyes were bright, her hair was a soft brown, and her complexion clear and white as a child's. His dutiful attentions to her, and the tender love he evinced for his sisters and family, impressed me greatly. His sisters were both like him, and were spirited, intelligent women, with strong convictions of duty and a wonderful inborn dignity that is not to be acquired by education: it is a gift.

After our visit was finished we went to the St. Charles, then the first hotel in New Orleans. A great many fashionable people were

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\* In those days trousseaus were moderate, and young people did not expect presents, but gave them to the bridesmaids. The groomsmen were never expected to give presents. Two bonnets were an abundance, and every young bride had a "second-day dress," *i.e.*, one finer and more dressy than the rest, to wear on the day after her marriage, and among the plainer class of people this was worn at the "infair," *i.e.*, reception.



there, but one of those I remember most clearly now was Mr. Wilde the poet, whose sonnet, "My Life is like a Summer Rose," had made quite a local success. He was the uncle, I think, of the poet and æsthete Oscar Wilde.

A soiree was given the evening we reached the hotel, and first among the guests his figure impressed me. He was then about thirty-four or five, slender, and very refined in manner, with flashing black eyes, and a singular pallor of complexion. He was the first poet I had ever encountered, for my journeys had been of the character so happily described since as "Autour de ma Chambre." While I was listening attentively to his sprightly talk, and expecting his flow of conversation to become rhythmical, my husband came up, bringing General Gaines, who, at the request of some lady friends, was in full uniform. He was not a tall man, hardly—as my memory serves me—five feet ten inches tall. He had a fine military bearing; a good, compact head; stern blue eyes, and carried himself very proudly. His manner of talking was very peculiar; he halted between every two or three words in this manner: He was asked what he thought of General Scott's plan of retaining the French words of command in his "System of Tactics." He responded, "I a—think, sir,

that—a—the—a English language is a—sufficiently copious—to express—a—all the ideas that—a General Scott will—a—ever have.” As will readily be seen the two generals were not friendly. Mrs. Gaines, then a laughing, brown-eyed little woman, unwhipped of social conventionalities, not because she did not understand them, but because she understood them and was naturally lawless, was very attentive to her feeble old hero. She told me, in a pause of the conversation, that she was always uneasy about him; and he, when hearing his own name, looked at her and said, “A—what, my dear?” She responded, “I said you were the best and dearest old General in the world.” He praised my husband as “An—a—incomparable adjutant, and the most—a—fearless and—a—dashing young—a—soldier of—a—his day,” and I believed him; and confided to him, in a foolish little way, what I thought of Mr. Davis, and how much my husband thought of and loved him; and we found each other mutually agreeable.

In about six weeks we returned to Brierfield, our home, and took up our abode in a “cat and clayed” house, situated in the centre of, and behind, a magnificent grove of oaks, and flanked by thrifty fig-trees; the Quarter houses being to the right and left of us. The building was one of my husband’s

experiments as an architect, and he and his friend and servant, James Pemberton, built it with the help of the negroes on the plantation. The rooms were of fair size, and opened on a paved brick gallery, surrounded by lattice-work; but some miscalculation about the windows had placed the sills almost breast high. The outer doors were six feet wide, but on these he especially dwelt as most desirable for admitting plenty of cool air; however, when they were opened, the side of the house seemed to be taken down. The fireplaces were very deep, and looked as though they had been built in Queen Elizabeth's time, to roast a sheep whole. It was a cool house, comfortably furnished, and we passed many happy days there, enlivened by daily rides, in which we indulged in many races when the road was smooth. The game was more abundant then than the chickens are now. Wild-geese, in great flocks, made fat by the waste corn in the fields; wild-ducks by the thousand, and white and blue cranes adorned almost every slough, standing on one leg among the immense lily-pads that yet cover the low places with lemon-colored flowers as large as coffee-cups.

In these scenes and occupations we passed many happy days, looking after the sick negroes, reading and writing, and visiting our

neighbors and the Hurricane every day. We always expected to build another house, but it was not finished for five years after our marriage, and, though it was much more pretentious—indeed for that day a fine house—the other always seemed “home” to me.

## CHAPTER XIX.

IN THE TWENTY-NINTH CONGRESS, 1845-46.

IN the summer of 1845 Mr. Davis's name began to be mentioned very often as the proper nominee for a seat in Congress. In that day the nomination was equivalent to an election; it was not by districts but was by a vote of the State at large.

The question of the payment of the Union and Planters' Bank bonds had about this time brought many bickerings and much dissatisfactions into the party.

Mr. Briscoe, the leader of his party in Mississippi, and a repudiator *per se*, announced that he would not vote for any one but a repudiator. My husband heard of it, and sat up all night at the printing-office of the Whig paper and furnished copy to the compositors; for, on account of the business pressure of issuing their campaign documents, he could not get it done at the Democratic office. Thus he got out by the next day a pamphlet in which he expressed clearly his disapproval of repudiation. He advocated the payment of the Planter's Bank bonds, and that efforts should

be made for an amicable adjustment of the Union Bank bonds. These pamphlets he took with him to Jackson, where they were generally distributed. His friends implored him not to express this opinion to Mr. Briscoe, as he could and would defeat him. However, Mr. Davis went to Briscoe with his pamphlet, and after a little conversation Mr. Briscoe said, "Didn't you know I said I would not vote for any man holding these opinions?" "Yes," said my husband, "and therefore I thought you ought to know mine." But Mr. Briscoe did vote for him nevertheless, and Mr. Davis was nominated without any considerable opposition, and immediately left home to make the usual so-called canvas, which was merely becoming introduced to his constituents and examining into their peculiar needs before he left Mississippi for Washington.

Then I began to know the bitterness of being a politician's wife, and that it meant long absences, pecuniary depletion from ruinous absenteeism, illness from exposure, misconceptions, defamation of character; everything which darkens the sunlight and contracts the happy sphere of home.

JOHN C. CALHOUN





## CHAPTER XX.

### VISIT OF CALHOUN, 1845.

MR. JOHN C. CALHOUN had always been such a strict constructionist of the Constitution that encroachment, in defiance of the restrictions imposed upon the appropriation by Congress of money to improve one State or harbor at the expense of the rest, had been with him a constant cause of excited debate whenever such propositions were urged. About this time the effort had been renewed to obtain grants for the improvement of the different harbors on the Lakes, and especially that of Chicago, which was just then beginning to be built up into a city. On this subject there was a good deal of feeling between the Southern and Southwestern States.

Before attending a commercial convention in Cincinnati, Mr. Calhoun had in some measure changed his views, and in a speech in his journey through the West and South (before the convention at Cincinnati) he justified the appropriation for the Lakes, and suggested one for the Mississippi River, because they were all "inland seas." Great was the con-

fusion of his allies and adherents throughout the Democratic party: they looked upon the proposition as class legislation, not justified by the Constitution, and a latitudinarian construction of this instrument by him was as though Moses had altered the Commandments. In this state of feeling he drew nigh to Vicksburg in his tour, and my husband was invited to welcome him.

Mr. Davis had known Mr. Calhoun with some degree of intimacy since 1836, and received his cadet's warrant from him. Strongly opposed to internal improvements by the General Government, Mr. Davis meant to be very circumspect in what he said, and also to avoid having to write out the speech for the reporters afterward. He pondered and dictated it to me, and the delivery was to consume half an hour. The "inland seas" were gracefully left to take care of their own shores, and the speech, as written, had an amount of pretty imagery and lofty rhetoric in it, that, to my girlish taste, was as wonderful as it was charming. It had the usual stanzas of poetry, and the ship of state tossing, as it does for all young orators, on a stormy sea, while the statesman addressed took its bearings and brought it "safe into port!" The speech was, at last, clearly written out in my best hand, and the pages numbered. It was my

glorious privilege to be permitted to perpetuate such eloquence! We then prepared our house for a long absence, and commenced our journey to Washington, taking with us our niece, Miss Mary Bradford.

We reached Vicksburg in the afternoon of the night that was to bring Mr. Calhoun to us. A numerous company of elegant people, who had come in from forty miles around Vicksburg, were gathered in a public hall. Dr. William M. Gwinn and his handsome young wife were there, and numbers I did not know. The boat was delayed and the guest of the evening did not arrive until the large assemblage were tired out. Then, after rustlings, cranings of necks, and whispered remonstrances at the delay, the door opened, and the committee, escorting Mr. Calhoun, entered.

My Whig proclivities had inclined me to be coolly civil to the stern zealot with whom I could feel no sympathy; but when Mr. Calhoun, with head erect, cast his eagle eyes over the crowd, I felt like rising up to do homage to a king among men. His head was long rather than broad, the ears were placed low upon it, the depth from front to back was very great; his forehead was low, steep, and beetled squarely over the most glorious pair of yellow brown shining eyes, that seemed to have a

light inherent in themselves; they looked steadily out from under bushy eyebrows that made the deep sockets look still more sunken. When excited, the pupils filled the iris and made his eyes seem black. He lowered them less than any one I have ever seen; they were steadily bent on the object with which he was engaged; indeed on some people they had an almost mesmeric power.

He wore his thick hair all the same length, and rather long, combed straight back from his forehead. This, with his brilliant eyes and unflinching gaze, gave his head the expression of an eagle's. His mouth was wide and straight; he rarely smiled, and the firm, square chin and grave manner made a personality striking in the extreme. He was tall and slenderly built, quick and alert in both speech and movement, but mind and body were so equally and rarely adjusted to each other that no dignity could be more supreme than Mr. Calhoun's.

His voice was not musical; it was the voice of a professor of mathematics, and suited his didactic discourse admirably. He made few gestures, but those nervous, gentlemanly hands seemed to point the way to empire. He always appeared to me rather as a moral and mental abstraction than a politician, and it was impossible, knowing him well, to

associate him with mere personal ambition. His theories and his sense of duty alone dominated him.

Now the forthcoming speech of welcome was to be delivered, and I was for the first time to hear my husband address an assembly. Dread was the prevailing feeling. The world had not then given its *imprimatur* to him, and I felt like a mute inglorious Columbus who had discovered a new continent, and that my El-Dorado was to enrich the millions. He had asked me not to look at him while speaking, so I heard only his beautiful voice, expressive of respectful regard in every tone. He greeted the great statesman with a few words of personal and general welcome, and then began, in rather a slow manner, evidently trying to remember the aforesaid speech ; but as he progressed his voice grew round and clearer until it filled the large hall to the echo. Without pausing for a word, he passed in rapid review the tariff, the currency, the probable addition of Texas to the Union—which was then an exciting theme—as there were many opponents of the measure. He did not even look askance at nullification, or internal improvements by the General Government, but made a strong appeal for strict construction of the Constitution, and an eloquent statement of the power, the glory, and the

danger of our country ; a short review of Mr. Calhoun's career as Secretary of War, Senator, and Vice-President ; and then came to the home-stretch with State rights sails all set and Mr. Calhoun at the helm.

Round after round of applause greeted the orator, and then Mr. Calhoun deliberately arose. After the enthusiastic greeting had subsided, amid profound silence, I heard him for the first time. His language was plain to poverty ; he never used a trope or simile ; and seemed to argue as though alone with one man, and he a devoted patriot, who only aimed to know the right to do it with all his might.

Mr. Calhoun made no appeals to any emotion. The duty of a citizen to the State was his theme ; the reward he offered was the consciousness of having performed it faithfully. He spoke so fast, in words so concise, that the loss of one or two rendered it hard to follow him. He borrowed nothing from the style or thoughts of authors of the past or present. It was the chart of his faith which he turned toward us and explained its bearings, taking it for granted we were to sail with him ; and I do not think any one present would have hesitated then to do so.

When the applause which followed subsided a little, he passed from one lady to an-

other, saying to each a few words without a trace of gallantry ; yet, though he was gray and much emaciated, the fire within made him seem hardly to have reached middle age. He devoted a little more time than to others to the wife of the orator of the evening, and his manner was so paternal and full of indulgent sympathy that I found myself telling him what a grief it was to contemplate my first separation from my mother. He spoke of a daughter named Cornelia, near my age, who loved him better than any one else, and told some little anecdotes of her, and of his brilliant Anna, who married Mr. Clemens.

Thus began a friendship which lasted through his life, and was attested by long letters on governmental subjects, written as though to an intellectual equal. It was one of the sources of his power over the youth of the country that he assumed nothing except a universal, honest, co-intelligence between him and the world, and his conversation with a girl was on the same subjects as with a statesman. His perceptions were so quick, however, that after a few words in response to him he would interject, " Yes, yes, I know what you mean," and proceed to answer at once to the unexpressed opinion. His letters were all lost during the war ; but it was I and not posterity that sustained the misfortune,

for his handwriting, though it looked neat, was almost undecipherable. I once sent him back his letter to read for me, and he responded, "I know what I think on this subject, but cannot decipher what I wrote."

These two speeches, the third I had ever heard—the first was one by Sargent Prentiss—excited me greatly; but when a lull came, a certain pity for the loss to the world of the written speech over which we had toiled so industriously came upon me. Not one word had been repeated of all the very fine things I had indited in a fair hand—and all for nothing! However, the amateur reporters had entirely forgotten their object, and neglected to give the speech as it was delivered; we had no time to rewrite it, so the other was printed instead. If still in existence, it will be a thing of joy to the young people, but very unlike the address, or any other Mr. Davis ever made afterward.

From that day forth no speech was ever written for delivery. Dates and names were jotted down on two or three inches of paper, and these sufficed. Mr. Davis's speeches never read as they were delivered; he spoke fast, and thoughts crowded each other closely; a certain magnetism of manner and the exceeding beauty and charm of his voice moved the multitude, and there were appa-



rently no inattentive or indifferent listeners. He had one power that I have never seen excelled; while speaking, he took in the individuality of the crowd, and seeing doubt or a lack of coincidence with him in their faces, he answered the mental dissonance with arguments addressed to the case in their minds. He was never tiresome, because, as he said, he "gave close attention to the necessity of stopping when he was done."

Only so much of his eloquence has survived as was indifferently reported. The spirit of the graceful periods was lost. He was a parenthetical speaker, which was a defect in a written oration, but it did not, when uttered, impair the quality of his speeches, but rather added a charm when accentuated by his voice and commended by his gracious manner. At first his style was ornate, and poetry and fiction were pressed from his crowded memory into service; but it soon changed into a plain and stronger cast of what he considered to be, and doubtless was, the higher kind of oratory. His extempore addresses are models of grace and ready command of language.

The next day we took a boat for Wheeling, which was the route usually pursued by persons going North at that season. Otherwise, Congressmen went by river to New Orleans, and by rail, river, and stages through

Alabama and Georgia until they reached Charleston, and there took ship for Norfolk. This was called the "Southern route," and consumed five days and nights of hard travel. There were no sleeping cars, and the only way to get rest, if greatly fatigued, was to stop overnight at some miserable little inn and lose a day, or go on and trust to a good constitution to bear one through. This latter mode we preferred.

The river soon began to be full of floating ice, which crunched alarmingly against the sides of the boat, and, after making very little headway, we ascended the Ohio River to what the captain called the "Norrows." The ice closed around us, and we remained on board nearly a week, hoping for a thaw. Here we had an amusing experience of the frankness of the uneducated classes. The pilot's wife had been permitted a cabin passage, "to give her a treat," and she was intensely interested in finding out "what on airth that man was takin' them delicate, puny-lookin' gals through all the cold fur." She tried in vain to find out where we "was agoin' anyhow." My husband was much amused by her skilful interposition of questions on all occasions, and, in order to draw her out, did not answer them. At last she flushed fiery red, and said, "My name is McGruggy, an' I

ain't ashamed of it, an' I am goin' to Cincinnati, and I don't see but what I am good enough for that man to tell me whar he is a goin'—then, with a sniff, she turned to her little tow-headed daughter and said, "Si-i-s, Davis ain't a aristocratic name, no-how." However, later, our mutual suffering brought us nearer together, and she gave me some fine apricot seed, which grew and bore at Brierfield for nine years under the name of "The Pilot's Wife." Eventually a very small boat came alongside of ours with great puffing and ringing of bells; we were transferred to her as of lighter draft. She puffed and steamed all night, and in the morning had only reached the south bank, in sight of the boat we had left. Then her wheels ceased to revolve and we had to debark and continue our journey, at the imminent risk of our lives, on a rough wood-sled with oaken runners, sitting on our trunks. The member from South Mississippi, Colonel Robert N. Roberts, a kind and very shrewd and observant old gentleman, much respected and entirely trusted by his constituents in Mississippi, was our only companion. The narrow road, slanting sidewise, covered with frozen snow, ran about half-way up the side of a mountain on one side, and sloped on the other steeply to the river. When a quarter of the journey

had been traversed the sled slipped over, and we were precipitated down a bank twenty feet beneath the road, and our trunks followed their owners at a breakneck pace. Colonel Roberts, in his fall, struck a tree and broke a rib, and I sustained severe contusions about the head. After a day's travel we stopped for the night at "Cresap's House," \* on the Ohio River, a historic place, and in the course of the evening the hostess—a handsome, bright-eyed woman, in a large white muslin turban—being stirred by some vague memory, asked my servant to tell her my maiden name; and then related how my father and mother, and Mr. Joseph E. Davis, had spent the night there, when "going through the wilderness," just nineteen years before. When my husband inquired why she remembered them so well, she answered, "They were so beautiful and so cheerful, I have never forgotten them, and your voices are the same." When we reached Wheeling my husband's feet, of which he had not complained, were frozen, and Colonel Roberts suffered much. A line of stages ran over the Alleghany Mountains to take passengers to Brownsville, and a

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\* It was near this house that Logan's family were killed in 1774, and Cresap was supposed to have been instrumental in the murder; therefore Logan and his band massacred a large number of settlers in the vicinity.

little boat plied from there to Pittsburg. The people who traversed that road and survived, certainly should properly have been designated "the fittest," for we were thrown very often up to the roof of the stage, and the old vehicle creaked and groaned audibly in concert with our exclamations of pain or terror within. When the snow was deep, the wheels slipped to the very verge of precipices so steep that it made one dizzy to contemplate them even from a vantage-point of safety. On several occasions the gentlemen jumped out and chocked the wheels, while the coachman whipped his horses and turned them across the road to hold the stage back; but the mountains and the snow-laden firs that cling to their sides were worth the risk for "one glance at their array." After three weeks of peril, discomfort, and intense cold, during which we were obliged to eat our life-long supply of worst with maple syrup for a condiment, we reached Washington more dead than alive.

Under all these disadvantages Mr. Davis was cheerful; always ready with some pleasant story, making light of the discomforts, and sometimes singing "We'll tough it out till morning." When exhortations and jests failed, he went into the little wayside inns and bought candy and milk, and told us to "drink deep and forget our sorrows." Once, when

hard-boiled eggs without salt were given us, as we were ruefully contemplating the luncheon he called out, theatrically, "What is the province of salt? 'Salt seasons dainties, blunts the sabre's edge,' " etc.

So, half-dead with fatigue, but trying our best to command his respect by being stoical, though bruised black and blue, we arrived in Washington, and took temporary lodgings at the "National Hotel" on Pennsylvania Avenue.

How grand and *blasé* the people all looked to these weary country girls, who had never seen anything more worldly than their domestic mothers! There was Mrs. Myra Clarke Gaines, then not more than ankle-deep in her great suit. The beautiful Mrs. Ashleigh, afterward Mrs. John J. Crittenden; Apollonia Jagello, a Polish heroine, with a heavy mustache and a voice to match; Mrs. James Gordon Bennett; Mr. Calhoun and his family, just leaving for the house in which they were to live on Missouri Avenue; Mr. McDuffie, of South Carolina, formed in the same physical mould with Mr. Calhoun, but bearing aloft a cavalier's head, and who, like Launcelot, though a doughty and most valiant knight, was "not averse to dalliance for a while" with the pleasures of society; Judge Douglas, the impersonation of the talent and

force that "westward took its way." Judge Woodbury of the Supreme Court, a profound thinker, a faithful friend, and tender father and husband, whose brilliant eyes and gentle manners charmed me from the first, was there with his beautiful daughter, afterward Mrs. Montgomery Blair. She was the impersonation of a feminine *Die Vernon*—strong, tender, and beautiful in body and mind. Mrs. Woodbury was a singularly well-preserved, handsome, and elegant woman, and a most amiable and charitable creature. To this day I remember with a thrill of pleasure her remonstrance with Mrs. Blair and myself for laughing over a note she had received from an Associate Justice's wife, who had met Webster's Spelling-book too late in life. This lady declined an invitation, and plead a severe cold as her excuse in this wise: "I have consulted a doctur and must endure my disappointment, it is nobel to bare but harde to suphur." Mrs. Woodbury looked at us gravely and remarked, "Do you not think that, with such difficulty about spelling, it was kind in her to try it?"

Mr. Bodisco was the Russian Minister at that time, and his child-wife, lately a school girl from the District, was the admiration of all men, and for that matter women too. Her husband's looks were a powerful foil to hers, but he was most agreeable and kind.

It is strange in the present memory of past events to think how many people were assembled there that winter who more or less entered our after-lives and were important factors therein. Mr. Seddon was there with his handsome bride. Colonel, afterward General Dix, was then a Senator from New York, and was one of the distinguished few who "kept house."

Mr. Lincoln, I have heard, was a member of Congress that session. Mr. Slidell passed through Washington *en route* from Mexico, where he had been on some diplomatic mission, and we called to see him. When Mrs. Slidell entered the room her beauty, which was of the best "creole type," impressed us most agreeably. Mr. Slidell was also a man to be noticeable anywhere. He had an air of quiet refinement that was very attractive, and his features were regularly handsome; but he looked, and indeed was, so much older than his wife that the contrast was sharp. Her features were regular, her figure noble, and she looked so dignified and was so fair and courteous with her French *empressement* of manner that the impression she made on me then was never effaced, and years after ripened into a sincere friendship that was never interrupted.

Mr. Buchanan, who was then Secretary of



State, came to the hotel one evening, and made a strong impression on me. He was very tall and of fine presence, and always wore a wide and spotless white cravat, faultlessly tied. His complexion was very fair and delicate, and his eyes were blue; but one of them had sustained some injury that had obscured the sight. The first thought that one had in looking at him was, how very clean he was. The only drawback to his appearance was a nervous jerking of his head at intervals, but it was not so often as to render him at all absurd. His unwilling footsteps were then just upon the boundary of middle age, and a more charming man could hardly be imagined. He was particularly gifted in polite repartee, and quick as a flash in response. In those days he liked society, and to be *bon camarade* to thoroughly refined women. At an evening entertainment Miss B—— very much desired a little dove that was nestled in a wreath of ivy, but had not uttered the wish. The master of the house—an aspirant for office, and not over fond of Mr. Buchanan—seeing her admiration of it said, “I wish I were tall enough to reach that dove, Miss B——, you always put me in mind of one, and I would give it to you.” Mr. Buchanan reached up several times to get it, and the host remarked, “Take care.

even you may reach too far." Mr. Buchanan turned a searching look upon him, and, making another effort, secured the toy and remarked, "Fearless minds climb soonest unto crowns, you know." He had a reticent temper, but masked it under a diplomatic frankness of speech that was very engaging.

Montgomery Blair, then a slender young widower, used to come very often to see Judge Woodbury's fair daughter; he was tall and not personally graceful, and had what English people call a thoroughly American type of face, but he was only ten minutes behind the handsomest man present, for his smile was genial and he listened and responded with intelligent sympathy, and was as faithful and sincere as he was tender and sympathetic. It is much to escape that most terrible scourge to society, one who listens to controvert.

After about ten days we found rooms in a house near by on the Avenue, and joined a "Congressional mess," that is, a boarding-house into which a certain number of men holding the same political faith agreed to go for the session, reserving the right, if the equivalent was paid, to exclude any objectionable person.

In our mess were the two members from Mississippi, and their pleasant, kindly wives,

Mr. Jacob and Mrs. Thompson, and Mr. Steven Adams with his wife ; General Jones, of Iowa, was there for awhile ; and a Mr. Foster, of Pennsylvania, and several others, with the memory of whom forty-three years have played sad havoc. Robert Dale Owen, the younger, boarded quite near us, with Daniel S. Dickenson, of New York, who was as cheerful and enthusiastic as a boy ; he came to us almost every evening for what he called a little " confab."

Now began Mr. Davis's earnest work. He visited very little, studied until two or three o'clock in the morning, and, with my assistance, did all his writing. Between us we franked all the documents sent to his constituents, and all the letters, and to calls upon him for service he scrupulously attended. He was " a working member ;" but, I think, believed it his destiny to attain distinction at some future day. There was always something lofty about his bearing, for his was the natural dignity which cannot brook familiarity. An instance of this latter peculiarity, which occurred very soon after our arrival, always provoked a smile.

One of the Senators from Mississippi, Mr. Jesse Speight, was a singularly handsome man, and no respecter of persons. He did not hesitate to call Mr. Cass or Mr. Clay to his seat if he wished to speak with them.

They all liked him, and came with an indulgent smile. Two or three times he had called my husband from home at quite a late hour to confer with him on some subject which could have been postponed. At last, one snowy morning, at about eight o'clock, a note was handed in at our door,

"Come over.

"SPEIGHT."

To which Mr. Davis made answer,

"Can't.

"DAVIS."

It was taken, however, in good-humor by the Senator, and never mentioned without a laugh by either side, though while writing his reply, my husband was in no pacific mood. It bore the relation to us then that a telegram at dawn of day about a trifle does now.

*A propos* of telegrams, I find in an old letter at this time this announcement:

"We went down to-day to see Mr. Morse's machine make the wires talk, and repeat messages from one town to another. There are small wires stretched from Baltimore to this place, and they are brought into the windows of a house on the Avenue. Inside of a little stall a man sits and sends messages and receives the answers. I think it is a trick, but paid my two-bits (twenty-five cents) to get a message 'that it was a fine day.'"

From another letter of 1850 I cull this sentence :

“There is a machine in town, I hear, that stitches like the hand-work.”

That was the description of the now universal and indispensable sewing-machine.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### MR. DAVIS'S FIRST SESSION IN CONGRESS.

MR. DAVIS took his seat as a member of the House of Representatives on Monday, December 8, 1845.

On the 29th of the month he offered two resolutions—the first:

“That the Committee on Military Affairs be instructed to inquire into the expediency of converting a portion of the forts of the United States into schools for military instruction, on the basis of substituting their present garrisons of enlisted men by detachments furnished from each State of our Union, in ratio of their several representatives in the Congress of the United States.”

The second:

“Instructing the Committee on the Post-office and Post-roads to inquire into the expediency of establishing a direct daily mail route from Montgomery, Ala., to Jackson, Miss.”

With the presentation of these resolutions Mr. Davis for a time seemed satisfied. He remained in his seat, however, a keen ob-

server of the forms of parliamentary procedure, and made himself practically familiar with the questions likely to come up for discussion during the session.

His first speech was successful. On February 6, 1846, on the Oregon question, in Committee of the Whole, he addressed the House.

It seems needless at this late day to revive dead discussions and to elaborately explain political issues that have long since been settled. I shall therefore quote only such passages from the official reports as tend to illustrate traits of Mr. Davis's character or his subsequent political actions. In this speech Mr. Davis exhibited one characteristic that was never modified and often put to crucial tests—his contempt for illiterate clamor and demagogical attempts to influence legislation. He said: "Unfortunately the opinion has gone forth that no politician dared to be the advocate of peace when the question of war is mooted. That will be an evil hour—the sands of our Republic will be nearly run—when it shall be in the power of any demagogue or fanatic to raise a war clamor and control the legislation of the country. The evils of war must fall upon the people, and with them the war feeling should originate. We, their representatives, are but a mirror to

reflect the light, and never should become a torch to fire the pile. But, sir, though gentlemen go, torch in hand, among combustible materials, they still declare there is no danger of fire. War speeches, and measures threatening war, are mingled with profuse assurance of peace. Sir, we cannot expect, we should not require, our adversary to submit to more than we would bear; and I ask, after the notice has been given, and the twelve months have expired, who would allow Great Britain to exercise exclusive jurisdiction over Oregon? If we would resist such an act by force of arms, before ourselves performing it, we should prepare for war."

Drawing a comparison between Texan annexation and Oregon occupation, Mr. Davis indignantly denied the assumption that there had been inconsistency on the part of Southern men in treating this question. "Who are those," he asked, "that arraign the South, imputing to us motives of sectional aggrandizement? Generally, the same who resisted Texan annexation, and most eagerly press on the immediate occupation of the whole of Oregon. The source is worthy the suspicion. These were the men whose constitutional scruples resisted the admission of a country gratuitously offered to us, but now look forward to gaining Canada by conquest. These



are the same who claim a weight to balance Texas, while they attack others as governed by sectional considerations."

He repudiated for his people this doctrine of a political balance between different sections of the Union.

"It is not," he contended, "of Southern growth. We advocate the annexation of Texas as a 'great national measure;' we saw in it the extension of the principles intrusted to our care. And if, in the progress of the question, it assumed a sectional hue, the coloring came from the opposition that it met; an opposition based not upon a showing of the injury it would bring to them, but upon the supposition that benefits would be obtained by us."

In referring to the support which the administration might expect in the event of war with England, Mr. Davis eloquently vindicated the loyalty of Mississippi. His State was fortunate in her champion. On this theme never once did he utter an uncertain note. As here, in his first speech in Congress, so, on every future occasion, in or out of that body—whenever and wherever slander might seek to sully her fame—she relied with a confidence never disappointed that he would vindicate her honor. In the course of this speech he said:

“ Though this Government has done nothing adequate to the defence of Mississippi, though by war she has much to lose and nothing to gain; yet she is willing to encounter it, if necessary, to maintain our right in Oregon. Her Legislature has recently so resolved, and her Governor, in a late message, says: ‘ If war come to us it will bring blight and desolation; yet we are ready for the crisis.’ Sir, could there be a higher obligation on the representative of such a people than to restrain excitement—than to oppose a policy that threatens an unnecessary war? . . .

“ The history of Mississippi, brief as it is, relieves me from the necessity of pledging her services to our Union in the hour of its need. But the marked omission of the gentleman from Missouri requires my attention. In recounting the services of the past, as earnest for the future, he gave to every neighboring name a place, but left out Mississippi; passed over it unheeded in his transit from Alabama to New Orleans. Sir, let me tell him that Mississippi’s sons bled freely in the Creek campaign, and were leaders at Pensacola; further, let me tell him that, when they heard of an invading foe upon the coast of Louisiana, the spirit was so general to sally forth and meet him at the outer gate, that our

Governor issued orders to restrain their going; and on the field to which he has so specially alluded—the battle of New Orleans—Mississippi dragoons, led by our gallant Hinds, performed that feat which the commanding general announced as the “admiration of one army and the wonder of the other.” Sir, I will only add that, whenever the honor of our country is assailed, wherever its territory is invaded—to the North or to the South, to the East or to the West—if then we shall be warned of the prowess of the foe; if then we shall hear of armed fleets that skim along the sea and wait like birds of prey to swoop upon our commerce; if then we shall be threatened with a cloud of banners that, folded, wait to gather on our sky, and darken it with the storm of war; from the Gulf shore to the banks of our mighty river, through the length and breadth of Mississippi, her sons will answer with defiance and scornfully reply:

“ ‘ Free be your banners flung—we’re loth  
Their silken folds shall feed the moth ! ’ ”

This same debate emphasized another characteristic of Mr. Davis, love for those memories, which formed the common heritage of glory of all the States of the Union. In the service of his country he knew neither

North nor South, neither East nor West. "From sire to son"—was his noble peroration—"has descended our federative creed, opposed to the idea of sectional conflict for private advantage, and favoring the wider expanse of our Union. If envy and jealousy and sectional strife are eating like rust into the bonds which our fathers expected to bind us, they come from causes which our Southern atmosphere has never furnished. As we have shared in the toils, so we have gloried in the triumphs of our country. In our hearts, as in our history, are mingled the names of Concord, and Camden, and Saratoga, and Lexington, and Plattsburg, and Chippewa, and Erie, and Moultrie, and New Orleans, and Yorktown, and Bunker Hill. Grouped together, they form a record of the triumphs of our cause, a monument of the common glory of our Union. What Southern man would wish it less by one of the Northern names of which it is composed? Or where is he who, gazing on the obelisk that rises from the ground made sacred by the blood of Warren, would feel his patriot's pride suppressed by local jealousy? Type of the men, the event, the purpose it commemorates, that column rises stern, even severe, in its simplicity; neither niche nor moulding for parasite or creeping thing to

rest on ; composed of material that defies the waves of time, and pointing like a finger to the sources of noblest thought. Beacon of freedom, it guides the present generation to retrace the fountain of our years and stand beside its source ; to contemplate the scene where Massachusetts and Virginia, as stronger brothers of the family, stood foremost to defend our common rights. Remembrance of the petty jarrings of to-day are buried in the nobler friendship of an earlier time.

“ Yes, sir, and when ignorance, led by fanatic hate, and armed by all uncharitableness, assails a domestic institution of the South, I try to forgive, for the sake of the righteous among the wicked—our natural allies, the Democracy of the North. Thus, sir, I leave to silent contempt the malign predictions of the member from Ohio, who spoke in the early stage of this discussion ; while it pleases me to remember the manly and patriotic sentiments of the gentleman who sits near me (Mr. McDowell). In him I recognize the feelings of our Western brethren ; his were the sentiments which accord with their acts in the past, and which, with a few ignoble exceptions, I doubt not they will emulate, if again the necessity would exist. Yes, sir, if ever they hear the invader’s foot has been pressed upon our soil, they will descend

to the plain like an avalanche, rushing to bury the foe.

“In conclusion, I will say, free from any forebodings of evil, above the influence of taunts, beyond the reach of treasonable threats, and confiding securely in the wisdom and patriotism of the Executive, I shrink from the assertion of no right, and will consent to no restrictions on the discretion of the treaty-making power of our Government.”

On March 16, 1846, on a bill granting appropriations for certain harbors, Mr. Davis insisted on a strict construction of the Constitution in making appropriations for the improvement of rivers and harbors, which, although not at that time the source of public shame and scandal that it subsequently became, and still continues to be, threatened, under a latitudinarian interpretation of the Constitution, to lead to extravagant expenditures never contemplated by the framers of that instrument. He exposed, also, the sectional character of the proposed appropriations. After refuting some fallacies that had been advanced in support of the constitutional power to make these appropriations, Mr. Davis defined the spirit in which the Constitution should be interpreted.

“Sir, there is a just medium between the claim of unrestrained discretion for this Gov-

• *FIRST SESSION IN CONGRESS.*

ernment and its restriction to the mere of the bond. The grants of power are general, and therefore many things must attach as incident. If the States deny the means necessary to the existence of this Government, nothing is more sure than that it will usurp them, and then a contest will arise between the rival powers injurious to both. If, on the other hand, the Federal Government by indirection, seek more than is proper to its functions, and necessary to their exercise, indiscriminate opposition may be generated and the liberality of patriotism be lost in the conflict. The harmony, the efficiency, the perpetuity of our Union require the States, whenever the grants of the Constitution are inadequate to the purpose for which it was ordained, to add from their sovereignty whatever may be needed, and the same motives urge us to seek no power by other means than application to the States. To all that has been said of the inherent power of the Government, I answer, it is the creature of the States; as such it can have no inherent power; all it possesses was delegated by the States; and it is therefore that our Constitution is not an instrument of limitation, but of grants. Whatever was then deemed necessary was specifically conveyed; beyond the power so granted nothing can now be

claimed except those incidents which are indispensable to its existence—not merely convenient or conducive, but subordinate and necessary to the exercise of the grants.

“ . . . I have been surprised—yes, sir—and have regretted, to hear gentlemen treat the question of appropriations as though it were a division of Treasury spoil between the different sections of the Union. We are told that the South has the larger portion in the fortification specifications, and that this should satisfy us for any deficiency in those for our harbors. I recognize no such principle in legislation, and would not stoop to claim a share of the money, wrung from the Treasury for sectional advantage. . . . Though forts and light-houses and breakwaters and navy-yards stud the Northern coast, it is not of this that I complain. I urge, not that you have had too much, but that we have had too little. The examination which I ask is not what has been done, but what is now required? I make no other distinction than that which constitutional principles and relative necessity require.”

Beyond attending the caucuses of his party, introducing the before-mentioned speeches, and with some resolutions on business matters, and such like duties, Mr. Davis was



one of the most quiet members of Congress. Of the war clouds which lowered over the country Mr. Davis, many years after his active life had closed, wrote: "Texas having been annexed to the United States in 1845, and Mexico threatening to invade Texas with intent to recover the territory, General Taylor was ordered to defend Texas as a part of the United States. He proceeded with all his available force, about one thousand five hundred, to Corpus Christi. There he was joined by reinforcements of regulars and volunteers. Discussion had arisen as to whether the Nueces or the Rio Grande was the proper boundary of Texas. His political opinions, whatever they might be, were subordinate to the duty of a soldier to execute the orders of his Government, and without uttering it, he acted on the apothegm of Decatur, "My country; right or wrong, my country."

Texas claimed protection for her frontier; the President recognized the fact that Texas had been admitted into the Union with the Rio Grande as her boundary; and General Taylor was instructed to advance to the river. His force had been increased to 4,000, when, on March 8, 1846, he marched from Corpus Christi. He was of course conscious of the inadequacy of his division to resist such an

army as Mexico might send against it; but, when ordered by superior authority, it was not for him to remonstrate. General Gaines, commanding the Western Division of the army, had made requisition for a sufficient number of volunteers to join General Taylor, but the Secretary of War countermanded them, except as to such as had already joined. General Taylor, after making a depot at Point Isabel, advanced to the bank of the Rio Grande, opposite Matamoras, and there threw up an intrenchment, mounted field-guns, and made general provision for the defence of the place—Fort Brown. Leaving a garrison to hold it, he marched, with an aggregate force of 2,288, to obtain the necessary additional supplies from Point Isabel, about three miles distant. General Arista, the new Mexican commander, availing himself of the opportunity, crossed the river with an estimated force of 6,000 regular troops, ten pieces of artillery, and a considerable amount of auxiliaries. In the afternoon of the second day's march from Point Isabel, these were reported by General Taylor's cavalry to occupy the road in his front. He halted at a water-hole to allow the command to rest, and for the needful disposition for battle. In the evening a request was made that a council of war should be held, to which General Taylor assented. At the

meeting it was developed that the prevalent opinion was in favor of falling back to Point Isabel, there to instruct and wait for reinforcements. After listening to a full expression of views, the General announced: "I shall go to Fort Brown or stay in my shoes," a Western expression equivalent to die in the attempt. He then notified the officers to return to their commands and prepare to attack the enemy at dawn of day. In the morning of May 8th the advance was made by columns until the enemy's batteries opened, when line of battle was formed, and our artillery, inferior in number but superior otherwise, was brought fully into action, and dispersed the most of the enemy's cavalry. The chaparral—dense copses of thorn bushes—served both to conceal the position of his troops and to impede the movements of the attacking force. The action continued until night, when the enemy retired and General Taylor bivouacked on the field. Early in the morning of May 9th General Taylor resumed his forward march, and in the afternoon encountered the enemy in a strong position, with artillery advantageously posted. Taylor's infantry pushed through the chaparral lining both sides of the road, and drove the enemy's infantry before them; but the batteries held their position, and were so fatally used that it

was an absolute necessity to capture them. For this purpose the General ordered Captain Maywith to charge them with his squadron of dragoons. The gunners were cut down at their pieces, the commanding officer was captured, and the infantry soon thereafter made the victory decisive. The enemy's loss, in the two battles, was estimated at 1,000; Taylor's killed, 49. The Mexicans precipitately recrossed the Rio Grande, completely routed, leaving on the field the usual marks of defeat and rout. He then proceeded to Fort Brown. During his absence it had been heavily bombarded, and the commander, Major Brown, had been killed.

On the 28th the House resolved itself into Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, to take up the joint resolutions, tendering the thanks of Congress to General Taylor and the army of occupation for recent brilliant services on the Rio Grande.

On May 29th a skirmish opened between two men, for each of whom the future had in store the highest political responsibilities and honors. These men came from the same section. They coincided on the leading war issues; but their early associations and education had made them totally unlike in their powers and personal character.

One was Mr. Jefferson Davis, the other was Mr. Andrew Johnson.

Mr. Davis, in supporting the resolution, had protested against the unjust criticisms on the army and the West Point Academy, which had been expressed a few days previously by a member from Ohio. He hoped that gentleman (Mr. Sawyer) would now learn the value of military science, and that he would see in the location, construction, and the defence of the bastioned field-work opposite Matamoras "the utility, the necessity of a military education." Following, and tracing with a soldier's eye the whole of those admirable movements, guided by skill and knowledge, which had crumbled the stone walls of Matamoras to the ground, he asked him to say "whether he believed a blacksmith or a tailor could have secured the same results?" Mr. Davis mentioned these two trades at random not knowing that either tailor or blacksmith was present. Mr. Sawyer, while avowing himself a blacksmith, was good-natured enough in his retort. This controversy was renewed the next day by Andrew Johnson. Vaunting himself upon being a mechanic, with a slur upon an "illegitimate, swaggering, bastard, scrub aristocracy," he declared that "when a blow was struck upon that class, either direct or by innuendo, from Whig or

Democrat, he would resent it." He summoned all history, sacred and profane, beginning with Adam, who (he said) was a tailor, to do honor to his class of mechanics.

Mr. Davis had named two of the trades of civil life, he said, but in doing so he had no desire to attack any particular class. "His opinion was simply that war, like other knowledge, must be acquired." Nothing was more manifest throughout this debate than the courtesy of one party to it, unless it was the demagogism of the other. From this debate arose all Mr. Johnson's subsequent animosity against Mr. Davis.

When Mr. Davis sprung up all aglow with indignation, and with as much fervor as eloquence, paid this tribute to his Alma Mater, and put a lance in rest for her, Joshua Giddings raised his gaunt form, put his hand behind his ear and listened. Ex-President John Quincy Adams crossed over from the other side of the chamber and took a seat near enough to hear. Mr. Adams was a rather thick-set, short man, with irregular features; he had small, but bright, intense eyes; his head was large and entirely destitute of hair, and when excited it became a glowing red; his eyebrows assumed a pointed arch, and his mobile, rather large mouth, could wreath itself into the impersonation of lofty

disdain. His whole person and movements bore the stamp of good-breeding; there was a repose, a deliberate examination of the person addressing him which put the unfortunate on trial where he must, in dumb submission, be judged on his merits. When Mr. Adams listened to my husband I was a proud young creature, and knew he must be doing something well; but found, afterward, that, to every new member he listened attentively once, and never again, unless pleased. Mr. Adams, when the debate was over, arose and said to one of the other members, "We shall hear more of that young man, I fancy." While these amenities were at their height, Mr. Giddings showed a full set of gleaming teeth, and evidently enjoyed the little impromptu debate, not caring which got the worst of it. He seemed to think the slaveholders were given over to each other, and was willing to "let them alone."

On March 11, 1846, Mr. Polk sent a message in which he declared a state of war already existing. Mr. Davis, in the House, simultaneously with Mr. Calhoun, in the Senate, neither knowing the other had made the point, announced that while the President could declare a state of hostilities the right to declare war rested alone with Congress, the agent of the States. The rate at which

Federal power has encroached can be somewhat marked by this incident, which occurred in Congress at the time the first hostilities began in Mexico.

Finally the war, long threatened, had been in due form declared between the United States and Mexico. As the summer advanced the "dreadful call" came from Mississippi for Mr. Davis to command the First Mississippi regiment, which was organized at Vicksburg, and had elected him the colonel. He eagerly and gladly accepted. There were no telegraphs and few railways in those days. The notification was brought to Washington by a special messenger, his friend Colonel James Roach, of Vicksburg, Miss., who delivered it to Mr. Davis in the latter part of June, 1846. Then began hurried preparations for our departure for Mississippi.

The President had been authorized to appoint "two major-generals and four brigadier-generals, in addition to the present military establishment," and he intimated to Mr. Davis that he should like to make him one of them. My husband expressed his preference for an elective office; when pressed, he said that he thought volunteer troops raised in a State should be officered by men of their own selection, and that after the elective right of the volunteers ceased, the appointing power



should be the Governor of the State whose troops were to be commanded by the general. This was his first sacrifice to State rights, and it was a great effort to him.

He then endeavored to get the regiment armed with the rifles which afterward became so celebrated as the "Mississippi Rifles." He said that these would be more effective in the hands of our men than any other arms, as they were all used to hunting, and most of them had either a rifle or a double-barrelled shot-gun, and were good marksmen.

Before leaving Washington for the scene of hostilities, Mr. Davis had an interview with General Scott.

"It may be interesting to state," said Mr. Davis in 1889, "that General Scott endeavored to persuade me not to take more rifles than enough for four companies, and objected particularly to percussion arms as not having been sufficiently tested for the use of troops in the field. Knowing that the Mississippians would have no confidence in the old flint-lock muskets, I insisted on their being armed with the kind of rifle then recently made at New Haven, Conn. — the Whitney rifle. From having been first used by the Mississippians, those rifles have always been known as the Mississippi rifles."

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE SECRET SERVICE FUND — CHARGES AGAINST WEBSTER, 1845-46.

MR. DAVIS saw that he had been approved by Mr. Adams, and generally recognized as a personage in the House, without any one having an exact reason to assign for this distinction, and was subsequently brought more prominently into notice by an attack made upon Mr. Webster by Mr. Charles Jared Ingersoll in the House of Representatives.

The hands of the public men of the time had been clean of plunder, or the imputation of dishonesty—it was not a day of personal “investigations.” Wall Street had no subterranean passage leading to the White House; and an imputation upon the honor of a senator startled his colleagues like “a fire-bell in the night.”

Mr. Ingersoll astonished the House and Senate by moving an inquiry into Mr. Webster's conduct as Secretary of State. He asked for the papers relating to the killing of Durpree, an American. In 1837, a party of

Americans had made an effort to capture and occupy Navy Island, a British possession, and Durpree had been one of them. The attempt was not successful, the invading party were captured, and Durpree killed in the *mêlée*. In 1840, two years after, McLeod, the man who killed him, related the circumstance in a boastful manner in New York. He was arrested and tried for murder.

Mr. Fox, for the English Government, avowed the act and demanded McLeod's release. Mr. Ingersoll accused Mr. Webster of using the contingent fund and his personal influence over Mr. W. H. Seward, Governor of New York, to secure McLeod's release ; of expending public moneys in corrupting the press and the people, and of being himself a defaulter to the Government. He compared the illustrious ex-Secretary of State to Bacon, "the wisest and meanest of mankind," capping the indictment with the suggestion that Mr. Webster had offered the Northwest Territory to Great Britain in exchange for free-trade. Astonishing as it now seems, the resolution calling upon the President for the correspondence covering this period was passed — 136 yeas to 28 nays — though Mr. Adams assured the House, as an ex-President of the United States, that Mr. Webster had no opportunity to defraud the Government

of the secret-service money or contingent fund, without the co-operation of the President, and gave the most cogent reasons why these secret negotiations should not be made public.

It would be a most embarrassing precedent, and one it would be unadvisable to establish and impracticable to follow. Mr. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, Mr. Seddon, of Virginia, and most of the conservative men of the House objected to calling for the secret papers as a dangerous precedent; but Mr. Winthrop said if any were called for, he wanted also those concerning Texas and Louisiana. T. Butler King and other men of national reputation spoke warmly against the resolutions.

Seen in the light of the "investigations" of this day, and the immense deficits which have been discovered in the public funds, this inquiry of Mr. Ingersoll's seems to have been a mere "tempest in a tea-pot." Then it stirred men deeply on both sides of the House and became almost a party question. The effort to stain the great reputation of Mr. Webster, in the possession of which the North and South felt alike honored, the petty sum that he was accused of filching (\$5,460), horrified his friends and staggered the faith of his enemies in his accuser. Everybody was enlisted on one side or the other. The prevail-

ing impression made upon the moderate men of both parties was that Mr. Ingersoll's spleen was the result of some private pique.

Mr. Webster made rather a lengthy explanation to the Senate, before such a crowd of spectators in the galleries and on the floor of the Senate, that even outside the railing there was not standing room. His manner was not that of a man defending himself before enemies, but rather of a brother explaining to his family one of his contentions with the outer world, and confiding his unexpected annoyance to those of whose sympathy he was assured. I venture to say he received it very generally. The ladies and the reporters certainly were with him. After various pros and cons, stated by almost all the leading men of the House, following pretty much the bent of party rancor, the resolutions were passed.

This resolution called up T. Butler King, of Georgia, in defence of Mr. Webster; Mr. Ingersoll in reiteration and reaffirmation; Mr. Ashman, of Massachusetts, in defence.

Mr. Schenck and Mr. John Pettit (Democrat) each moved that a committee be organized, the first to inquire how the seal of confidence imposed upon the Department had been broken; the second to examine into the charges, with a view to impeaching Mr.

Webster. This last committee, of course, had the power conferred to "send for persons and papers." Under this permission ex-President Tyler had been summoned to Washington. On the committee, as finally organized, were Mr. Vinton, of Ohio; Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi; D. P. King, of New York, and Jacob Brinkerhoff, of Ohio. It was before them that ex-President Tyler appeared and exonerated Mr. Webster.

There were two reports written: one vindictory of Mr. Webster, but deprecatory of further inquiry, and a minority report, which was written by Mr. Davis, and was not the one at first designed to be presented, but which finally, after many emendations, was accepted by the committee.

As Mr. Webster was looked upon at the time as the prominent candidate for the Presidency, there were some unpleasant remarks about a Democrat "whitewashing" him; and a Northern tariff Democrat came to Mr. Davis, at our lodging, the night before the result of the committee's deliberations was announced, to argue against the opportunity being lost of "scotching the snake." Mr. Davis told him with much heat that if Mr. Webster was to be entailed upon the country for life, "and no one could deprecate his

policy more than I do, I would not make a false and partizan report or parley with my sense of justice and honor, nor would the gentlemen associated with me." The letter is much defaced from which this quotation is made, and all the account cannot be deciphered.

Mr. Webster called upon Mr. Davis and expressed in warm terms his sense of the manly manner in which he had defended him. Mr. and Mrs. Webster came to call upon me, and invited me most kindly to accompany them to Marshfield.

It was in 1845 that the first "Exposition" of a general character took place. It was called then a "National Exhibition." It was a very long, rough, clapboard room, with no pretention to any architectural merit. It occupied nearly two squares on C Street, and was perfectly straight except in the open square of the City Hall, there it extended an ugly arm about twenty feet. The stands for the exhibit were of unplanned wood, and they were covered with coarse, dark cambric. Almost every State sent earnest of its industry and ingenuity. Very wonderful they were to us then; but bungling efforts enough now, viewed by the light of modern discoveries.

The crowd was constant about a certain stand, and my husband made a place for me

to see the wondrous thing on it. It was a small box, and through a slot on the top was slowly pushed two narrow edges of cloth, and a needle with an eccentric motion played laterally through the cloth and sewed a pretty good seam. An old woman with bare knotty hands, a much pricked forefinger, and a large basket of cloth on her arm, pointed to the little box and said, with a snarl, "That's all nice, but sposed it ware breeches" (tapping her basket significantly), "that there box wouldn't begin to hold 'em." Mr. Davis always appreciated with boyish zest any humorous thing, and he laughed aloud. This daunted the exhibitor somewhat, but he shot a look of contempt at the practical old operative and plunged into a state of unintelligible terminology in which slots, tensions, head-pieces, spirals, cylinders, cogs, and what not made havoc with his audience. We fled; the old seamstress followed.

A few steps beyond us, coming also to view the "sewing-jenny," as it was most often called, strolled a tall thin gentleman, with a large, hooked nose, steady gray eyes, iron-gray hair, and a dignified, majestic presence, united to a certain benevolent, bland toleration of manner, like a general in musti among his troops. He approached us. When just about to pass, one of the loose planks in



the flooring tilted under his feet, and as he was going to fall Mr. Davis caught him. He recovered himself with easy grace and having offered thanks he turned to leave. I whispered, "I am sure *he* is somebody," which induced Mr. Davis to observe the stranger more narrowly. Immediately he made a very low bow and saluted ex-President Tyler, who was strolling through the Exhibition for the first time.

In that day, except in the case of re-election, no ex-President considered it a dignified course to return to Washington, and ex-President John Quincy Adams's return to serve in the House had been much criticised and regretted by all parties; but the "old man eloquent" concerned himself very little with the standards of others; he enjoyed and took his own way. Mr. Tyler remembered Mr. Davis also, and was gracious enough to speak of the impression he had received when Mr. Davis was presented to him in 1836.

Mr. Tyler accepted my husband's arm, and we walked slowly on, and then those two interesting gentlemen thoroughly succeeded in shuffling off the mortal coil of the childish young person who trotted beside them, ardently longing for a look at all the new and curious wares displayed; but perforce of the dignity and simplicity of their conversation

was somewhat consoled for the personal sacrifice. However, our few outings generally ended in the same way.

After a cursory view of the political horizon they plunged into a long conversation upon the recent inquiry into Mr. Webster's administration of the "secret service money." Mr. Tyler said he had been summoned to testify before the committee of investigation ; that he thought it a great outrage upon a man in whose genius the people of the whole Union gloried ; and that Mr. Webster had satisfied him, at the time, of its careful and wise use. Mr. Davis asked him if he had preserved notes of these secret transactions, and taking the affirmative for granted, went on to say : " I suppose you, Mr. President, can spread these now before us, as they are past history and Mr. Webster's best vindication." But Mr. Tyler gravely responded that he had never considered himself authorized to put on any private file the matters that the Government had decided should not appear on those of the country. I can give, if interrogated, dates, sums, and persons to whom the money was paid. The very nature of the service shows that it is Punic faith to those who give the information to expose their agency in the matter by making written record of it." Mr. Davis then politely pressed the stately old

man to tell how he could remember: "Is it by a system of mnemonics?" I mentally registered a vow to find out what mnemonics was, and be even with them. Mr. Tyler replied, and I think I remember the words of his answer: "No, sir, I remembered them as part of my duty to the state. As no written record was permitted, the Government took it for granted *I would not forget.*" They then strolled on, talking on public matters, and of the arts of agriculture, in which they were both proficient. A fine Hereford cow had been sent for exhibition from the ex-President's plantation, Sherwood Forest, on the James River, and he took us to the awkward arm of the building, in which were a few stalls, and showed us the cow. A man came and milked her, and Mr. Tyler, Mr. Davis, and I took a tin cup of unpleasantly warm but rich milk, and went out into the Capitol grounds, where they sat down on one of the benches and "talked above" me. In about an hour Mr. Tyler turned and said to me, in a wonderfully winning tone, "Have I spoiled your morning, Madam, with my dull talk?" My husband, partly conscious that he had, and fearful lest I might not be able to cope with the emergency, answered quickly: "Oh, no, my little wife is trying to be a statesman." They both laughed, and the

President then said he was going to make a call upon James Seddon, a young member of Congress from Virginia, a promising young man if his health proved equal to severe labor, and then spoke of Mrs. Seddon as a handsome creature, "who was, you know, Sarah Bruce." We did not know, but cheerfully said we would call upon them at another time at his request, and he bade us a cordial good-morning. I never saw him again until he came on, the arm of his beautiful wife to visit us in the Mansion, at Richmond, sixteen years afterward, and two years before my sister became his grand-daughter-in-law.

When I reached home I straightway wrote to my father, "Who do you think drank out of the same tin cup with me to-day? Why, ex-President Tyler, and he is not the man the *National Intelligencer* made him out at all. He is not handsome, but he looks a very fine gentleman, and I am sure was not afraid to meet the question of the tariff," and then went on to relate the incident above.

When these august shades rise before me whose active lives had been lived before I grew to womanhood, the responsible, serious youth that fell to my lot is not a subject of regret. The history of their day has to me a very stirring interest, and as I read the chronicles of their deeds, they stand clothed

in their well-remembered personality, struggling with united minds for the whole country, holding the interests and possessions of all equally sacred, and pledged to protect these with their lives. This is a blessed memory, unhappily not that of the youth of to-day.

Mr. Charles Ingersoll, notwithstanding his ill-made wig, great age, and prejudice against Mr. Webster, was, nevertheless, a charming old man, and *au courant* with all the polite literature of the day. The most delightful evening of my early youth was spent at Mr. Robert J. Walker's, when he was Secretary of the Treasury, talking with Mr. Ingersoll and Mr. George M. Dallas. No young men of this or any other day that I have seen, ever equalled them. These two splendid creatures, finding themselves in charge of a very inexperienced young person, commenced to angle in the shallow stream for such sport as the green recesses might afford. They talked to each other and to me of Byron and Wordsworth, of Dante and Virgil, and I remember the key they gave me to their tastes and temperamental divergence. Mr. Dallas said Wordsworth was the poet of nature, and Mr. Ingersoll remarked that he bore the same relation to cultivated poetic manhood that Adam did to Goethe, and "who would

hesitate for a moment which to choose if granted a day with either." Mr. Dallas immediately announced a preference for Adam, and insisted that a mind fresh from the storehouse of the Supreme Source of all knowledge must have developed many godlike facts instead of immature theories, etc. They whetted their wits upon each other for some time until I ventured the remark that, whether by sin and sorrow, or observation of natural forces, I felt that, as man progressed, he became more interesting, whereupon Mr. Ingersoll laughingly said, "You see Mrs. Davis agrees with me that Cain was more aggressive, and therefore more attractive than Abel, and the ladies in the Land of Nod clearly were more agreeable than those of Eden." After this evening Mr. Ingersoll was so good as to call several times, and I felt, in Yorkshire phrase, "uploifted" by the attention.

The whole family of Baches were brilliant, well-educated, and thoroughly pleasant people. They had little of poor Richard's thrift, but much of their grandfather's shrewd wit and wisdom. Mrs. Bache (*née* Dallas) and her sister, Mrs. Campbell, of Philadelphia, were rare women of the stamp of Lady Palmerston. Age did not seem to dull their sympathies nor impair their mental and moral qualities.

“ They wore the marks of many years well spent,  
Of virtue, truth well tried, and wise experience,”

and their wit and charm of manner placed them at sixty years of age, or more, only a few minutes behind the prettiest girl in that very literary and delightful society. Mrs. Campbell had but one child, a distinguished lawyer in Philadelphia—St. George Campbell—but Mrs. Bache had many sons and daughters, who played more or less brilliant *rôles* in governmental society. Dallas Bache, of the Coast Survey, in his day one of the greatest savans the country had produced ; George Bache, a brilliant naval officer, who gallantly gave up his life to save the passengers on his sinking ship, and with a sad smile took off his cap and bowed to them as his ship went down before the overladen boats ; Richard Bache, also an officer of the Navy, drowned while making a survey of the coast ; Mrs. Robert J. Walker, the wife of the Secretary of the Treasury and whilom Senator from Mississippi ; Mrs. Irwin, wife of the former Minister to Sweden ; Mrs. William H. Emory, whose husband was afterward a General in the United States Army, and who was herself a well-known wit ; Mrs. Charles Abert ; Mrs. Richard Wainright of the Navy, and Mrs. Allen McLane, a woman of marvellous wit, and strong, bright understanding.

They were all, in their different manner, *belles esprits*, and their children, many of them, are inheritors of much of the family talent—Mrs. Walker's beautiful daughter, Mary, afterward became Mrs. Brewster, the wife of the Attorney-General of President Arthur's Administration.

The Coast Survey at that day was a large, old-fashioned barrack of a house, on the edge of Capitol hill, overlooking Pennsylvania Avenue. It was very plainly furnished, and had no curtains to the drawing-room windows, but certain riotously healthy rose geraniums that grew in boxes were interlaced across the window panes and made a flickering green and gray light, and exhaled a delicate odor. This perfume now brings back a ray of the old joy that used to pervade us all when "the family" were bidden to supper there.

On these occasions Mr. Davis and Professor Bache, General Emory and Mr. Walker, jested like boys, told stories of their West-Point life, or of canvasses for office in Mississippi. I had known Mr. Walker since my infancy, and his wife was my mother's dear and intimate friend before my birth, and sometimes we went into a regular romp with him, in which he joined with boyish zest. Mrs. Dallas Bache was a petite and eccentric childless woman, with a great deal of character and



much common-sense, and she had not a little epigrammatic wit. Like Mrs. Gladstone, she had given up her life to her husband and was part of all his labors. Once he wrote to her from the Capitol to tell the clerks to send him, in great haste, some papers, needful for the defence of the Coast Survey. She inquired of them and found they knew nothing of what was wanted. She searched until she found them, and wrote only this commentary, " Pins have heads."

About nine o'clock we were ushered pell-mell into a long, unfurnished room, the walls of which were hung everywhere with scientific instruments; disused theodolites were shunted into dark corners; old telescopes, with all the paraphernalia of adjuncts to scientific investigation; and, in the middle of the room, was a great table laden with everything good and appetizing that Washington could furnish. Then the terrapins and canvas-back ducks were not, as now, going to join the buffaloes, the dodo, the roc, and the phoenix as extinct animals; so they were there in profusion. The perfume of the long-necked bottle of Rhine wine filled the room, which the Professor opened himself, there being no servants present, and the gentlemen pledged us and each other in a glass, and the quip and jest flew from one to another, and made of our

suppers at the Coast Survey real *noctes ambrosianæ*. When Professor Bache was domesticated with Humboldt, whither he went to investigate the school system of Germany, he learned to like these wines, and always imported them himself.

Mr. Davis was the life of the party, and I never heard him advert but once with regret to a night there. He was one Christmas persuaded to sing an Indian song, and Dallas Bache put on a fur coat to personate Santa Claus, and gave the presents in the most truly dreadful doggerel. Six months afterward, one warm summer day, Mr. Davis exclaimed that he felt oppressed; "but," said he, "I think it is not the weather, it must be the memory of my Indian song last Christmas, and dear Dallas Bache's execrable doggerel. I am sorry I did not make him sing, and do the rhyme myself." As the Professor could not turn a tune, and Mr. Davis had no capacity for jocular rhyme, I thought they had reached their utmost limits as it was, but refrained from venturing an opinion.

With the memory of that time come reminiscences of Mr. Robert C. Winthrop and Mr. Bancroft—two men wholly different, yet both most interesting in their way. Mr. Winthrop's *personnel* bore up his elegance of manner bravely; his refinement was physical

as well as mental and acquired. I never saw a woman who did not feel the implied compliment of his notice and a keen enjoyment of his society. His conversation was deliberate and unaffected, but most suggestive. It has been thirty years since I have seen him, but the memory of his friendly regard has always been cherished by me as a gift not to be voluntarily surrendered. Mr. Bancroft was an eccentric man, as typical of his section as Mr. Davis was of his, with a thousand graceful tastes, but a quaint, abrupt manner of seizing the salient points in the mind of his auditor, and turning them from side to side under his tourmal until every shade of color shone distinctly. It made me feel brilliant to talk to him. Then he had the knack of looking interested in the most simple, dull persons, and gave his undivided attention to them for the time. He was liberalized by extensive and observant travel, and could bear the dulness of others, being so able to illuminate it by his own light. His wife was a charming woman, with the best, but the most pronounced, type of New England manners — reserved to a fault, but very sweet and approachable to the few she accepted as congenial to her taste.

Governor Marcy was one of the lions of that time. His wife was a sterling woman, who had a great deal of social talent united to an

unconventional honesty remarkable in a woman of the world. They were wealthy, and entertained with ease and profusion. He was not a genial man; he was ambitious and too much in earnest to spare time for social intercourse, but he held well in hand a great deal of caustic wit, and never, though rather testy, ill-naturedly gave it the reins without great provocation. An old diplomat once said that he never understood Mr. Marcy's prominence in politics until he made him angry, "Und den I say here is von lion who is dressed for every day like von lamb."

We saw but little socially of the President's family during Mr. Polk's administration. We then did not keep a carriage, and Mr. Davis's wound incapacitated him from walking any distance, as he was on crutches, and we therefore boarded near the Capitol for his convenience. People neither made nor wasted money in that day as they do now, and were not indifferent to the fact that a livery carriage meant \$1.50 an hour; there were no tramways and no omnibus lines. The distance was so great between the two co-ordinate branches of Government, the Executive and the Legislative, that, taken in conjunction with the driver's alleged duty to make his horses creep, one could do little in making calls in the space of a day.

My social memory of Mr. and Mrs. Polk is meagre. He was not an impressive man at first, but his kind, even deferential, but reserved manner won upon the person honored with his attention. He impressed me as a man innately single-minded, of simple tastes, and unimpugnable honor. His health was evidently not strong, and the duties of his office seemed to wear greatly upon him. Mrs. Polk was very decorous and civil in her manner to all. My acquaintance with her was very slight.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE SENATE IN 1845.

THE *personnel* of the House was at this time not so notable as that of the Senate; it was more noisy, less distinguished, if one might so say, than when ex-President Adams was there and the two Ingersolls, besides many others who became notable afterward. Judge Stephen A. Douglas was just beginning to figure in the public eye as a leading man of pronounced opinions. Mr. Lincoln, I have heard since, was also there.

Vice-President George Mifflin Dallas presided over the Senate with matchless grace and temper, and it was at that time an august body composed of men of great dignity, intellect, and integrity.

The Senators wore full dress on the floor of the Senate, or such ceremonious garments as marked their respect for the place. The older men wore silk stockings and low shoes. Mr. Dallas always wore a spotless white cravat. He was tall and well proportioned, his eyes and eyebrows were quite black, and his hair, which was inclined to curl, was snowy

white. There was a certain nice, delicate, sense of harmony and propriety about everything he did. For instance, if he wrote a note it was without erasures, placed in the most graceful manner on the paper, and sealed with care. He considered the peculiarities of every one as worthy of his notice, and never mortified the sensibilities of the most uneducated.

It was a little thing, but it showed his polite consideration for others. One of the Senators from Arkansas always called the State *Arkansas*, the other pronounced it *Arkansaw*. As each rose to address the chair, Mr. Dallas acknowledged the salutation with the Senator's preferred pronunciation. He bowed his stately head and said, "The Senator from *Arkansas*," or the "Senator from *Arkansaw*." No matter how hot the debate, he always followed this rule. Once a Senator, perhaps tired of hearing Mr. Dallas called just, made a most offensive attack upon him; but the Vice-President neither called him to order nor evinced the least consciousness of being the object of animadversion, and it seemed to discomfort his assailant sadly, who finally sat down. His "politeness was benevolence in small things."

Mr. Benton was a man of rare personal dignity, and he never descended from the

plane on which he had established himself. He was of medium height ; but was, when I saw him, an old man, and had become so stout that it subtracted from his height somewhat. He had a rather swelling oratorical manner, but had always something wherewith to maintain the dignity of his tone. Woe betide the man against whom he had a prejudice if, in an unwary hour, a statement unwarranted by indisputably attested facts had been made in contravention of any of his theories. In such a case one little page after another hied away to the library with small squares of paper memoranda for the librarian ; each one returned with a ponderous tome, until sometimes, especially when Mr. Clay was speaking, breast high before him on his desk rose a rampart of formidable books. Statesmen's manuals, Jefferson's letters, geographies of almost all countries, maps, antiquated books of travel—everything poured aliment into this great and retentive mind, and served as a weapon of offence or defence. Everything he knew was at once available, because his repose of mind never permitted him to be flurried or disconcerted. He had reasoned out his policy, and was entirely sincere in his opinions.

As soon as his antagonist took his seat, Mr. Benton arose, and with a courtly salutation to the Speaker, and one scarcely less so



to the doomed one, he began as one would hunt a hare. He took each ill-considered postulate and chased it over heavy ground until nearly overcome, and then he set on his authorities in full cry. With his hand upon the first book of the formidable collection before him, in most gentle tones he demonstrated that within those covers was the testimony of a patriot, an actor in the very event so strangely, so hideously misunderstood (with a little deferential bow and wave of the hand) by the gentleman. After the first blow he warmed to the work, and a finer display of varied reading in old and rare books, of statesmen's lore, of burning eloquence, keen satire, and exalted romanesque declamation could hardly be imagined. "Friends, countrymen, and lovers," would have seemed a natural invocation from him, and most people gladly listened that they might hear. I did. He had a habit of talking to himself as he walked home, and Grund, a Hessian reporter of the Senate, described him in a letter to the *New York Herald* thus: "I saw Mr. Benton walking up the avenue to-day, keeping up a gentle remonstrance with himself for being so much greater than the rest of the world."

It made the very women feel profound who heard him, and was for them a cheap and charming education in our governmental his-

tory. He never became so irritated (after I knew him) that he would not suffer any reasonable interruption by question or explanation; but nothing discomposed, daunted, or broke the silver threads of his argument. He calmly took them up again and wove the net tightly about his victim. He answered everything with a provoking kind of assured triumph that was so hard to bear because there was so little which could be disputed in the facts arrayed. But when Mr. Clay confronted him, it was

“Worth ten years of peaceful life,  
One glance at their array.”

Their policy, their ideas, their education, their method of oratory, their moral standards, everything differed. Each hated the other with the most unaffected bitterness. Mr. Benton's mailed glove lay always before the Senator from Kentucky; and not infrequently, when Mr. Benton had finished a noble argument, studded all over with darts of satire or vague reference to the past, that stung and clung to Mr. Clay until he was trembling with fury, he would sit down with a fine air of having been void of offence and in charity with all men.

Mr. Clay, who was a very impressive man, but not of the leonine character like his oppo-

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**THOMAS H. BENTON.**



nent, would rear his tall form, turn his blazing eyes on the Speaker, and begin with all amenities of debate to "puncture the Senator's balloon;" but Mr. Benton would throw down a little more ballast, and as he rose out of reach Mr. Clay would pour out a tide of keen, gentlemanly invective, and invoke memories not understood very often by the Senate, but infuriating in the extreme to his antagonist, and then came as grand a tourney and clash of equal minds in desperate encounter of angry wit as one could hear. They doubled and returned upon each other in feint and foil and deadly thrust; then the followers and close friends of each would ask to interpose a word, perhaps, to permit the contestants to get cool. But one day a Whig Senator from a Southern State, full of ardent affection for Mr. Clay, interrupted him just as he was bearing down in splendid style upon his antagonist, and Mr. Clay spoke aloud, "Sit down, sir, I can defend myself; sit down." Mr. Benton sent a soft smile of sympathy and amusement flying across, and the audience was with the Southern Senator, and Mr. Clay lost his point.

While Mr. Benton would be in full career demolishing some lesser man, Mr. Clay would cast a meaning look at him, and in a stage aside suggest a response; and then, no mat-

ter what the subject, in some way among the warp and woof of it, Mr. Benton would weave in Mr. Clay, who, always lance in hand, pushed on to the fight; and all smaller people stood aside for the two champions.

Mr. Calhoun never willingly engaged in these tilts. He was anxious about the policy which he thought it best to adopt; for this he plead with hurried, earnest, clear reasoning, never hesitating for a word, or indulging in any unnecessary blame or personalities. If he was misunderstood, he arose in an enthusiastic, quick manner, and repeated his assertion *verbatim*. Mr. Benton had no admiration for his political theses, but utter confidence in his simple honesty, and so they generally came to a friendly armistice.

Mr. Davis, only a few years ago, wrote of Mr. Calhoun: "In my early manhood I enjoyed his personal acquaintance, and perhaps more of his consideration, from the fact that, as Secretary of War, he gave me the appointment as a cadet.

"When, in 1845, I entered the House of Representatives, he was a Senator. I frequently visited him at his lodgings. His conversation was both instructive and peculiarly attractive. He and his colleague, the impulsive, brilliant orator, Mr. McDuffie, did not fully concur on the great question of the

day — notice to Great Britain to terminate the joint occupancy of Oregon — and their comparison of views, which, on one occasion I was permitted to hear, was deeply interesting.”

It will be remembered that Mr. Calhoun was induced to leave the repose his impaired health required, and return to the Senate, because of the threatened danger of war with Great Britain. War was to him an evil which only the defence of the honor and rights of his country would justify. That made him the advocate of the War of 1812, but in 1845 he saw no such justification, and was therefore in favor of negotiation, by which it was believed the evils of war could be avoided without sacrifice of the honor or rights of our country.

As a Senator he was a model of courtesy ; he listened attentively to each one who spoke, neither reading nor writing when in his seat, and, while his health permitted, was punctual and constant in attendance. He conducted his correspondence by rising at dawn and writing his letters before breakfast. Had he been the Senator of a new State, this would hardly have been possible.

Issues growing out of the disposal of the public lands within the States occupied much of the time of Congress, and for this and more

important reasons he proposed, for certain considerations, to surrender the public lands to the new States in which they lay. This was but another exhibition of his far-reaching wisdom and patriotism, as shown by his argument for the measure. Always earnest, often intense in debate, he never practised *ad captandum* devices, seldom sought the aid of illustration, simile, or quotation, but concisely and in logical sequence stated his views like one demonstrating a problem, the truth of which was so clear to his mind that he could not doubt its acceptance by all who listened to the proof. Perhaps he was too little of a party man to believe, as the English parliamentarian said, that he had known opinions, but had not known votes to be changed by a speech.

Wide as was his knowledge, great as was his wisdom, reaching toward prophetic limit, his opinions were but little derived from books or conversation. Data he gathered on every hand, but his ideas were the elaboration of his brain, were as much his own as is honey, not of the leaf, but of the bag of the bee.

Mr. Cass, who was a very large, fleshy person, always warm, and obliged to use a fan, which was the largest palm-leaf that I ever saw, fanned himself industriously until some



one either attacked his resolutions or his political record; then, in clear, statesmanlike logic, very devoid of ornamentation or rhetoric, he said what he thought; but, if one after another sprung into the debate, the contention somewhat confused him and he was not at his best. No one wrote better than Mr. Cass.

He was one of the kindest-hearted men in the world, and if he had to say no to any one, could not do it in person, but dismissed the applicant, who, friendly but uncertain, waited, quite buoyed up by hope, to receive in a few hours a courteous though decided refusal. Mr. Cass was testy sometimes, but it was the testiness of an overworked man, not an ill-natured one. Nothing annoyed him like being called a "Michigander;" he said the name was suggestive.

Mr. Webster sat to the right of Mr. Cass, and no words can describe the first impression he made upon me. I had heard of him, and spent long hours in reading aloud his speeches in the *National Intelligencer* when a mere child, and to see him was like looking at Jungfrau, or any other splendid natural phenomenon. There was no doubt as to where he sat, for the conviction of his identity was forced upon one when he turned his massive, overhanging forehead, with those great

speculative, observant eyes full of lambent fire. He was as careful as a woman about the delicate neatness of his attire. He generally wore a dress coat, well adjusted and of the finest material, spotless linen, and silk stockings with slippers, which in those days were called "pumps," tied in a bow on the instep of his shapely feet.

He, like Mr. Calhoun, always listened most attentively to any Senator who was speaking; but Mr. Webster, except when Mr. Calhoun or some other intellectual giant had the floor, had the air of protecting indulgence that a superior being might wear to an inferior. He was rarely offensive, but sometimes showed a dignified indulgence to weakness that was hard to hear. He never was voluble. A strong instance of the brevity of his wit was given once, when it had been expected that Mr. Webster would be nominated for the Presidency, but Messrs. Bell and Everett were chosen for the ticket. After the nomination was made, some people went up to Mr. Webster's house to serenade him. He was irritated and disappointed, and had just composed himself to sleep when the Marine Band blared out "Hail to the Chief." He did not appear for some time, and when the cries of "Webster! Webster!" became tumultuous, he put his head out of the window and said: "My

friends, the sun rules the day, and mankind watches his coming and going; but where, can you tell me where, the stars go in the morning?—they are seen no more. Good-night.” So he shut the window and retired.

Mr. Benton used to get very tired of the long speeches in the Senate, for he, too, listened attentively. One day a certain Senator, who spoke on all occasions, and for hours at a time, had consumed the day and worn out every one. As the dusk lowered upon the hall Mr. Benton arose, and in his deep voice moved an adjournment. “For,” said he, in his grand manner, “we are worse than the villiens, sir, worse than the villiens; they had their allotted time for work, but we are kept here, sir, until the stars shine out.” But there was an hour in the day that came to be recognized as one that Mr. Benton would have. About midday, or perhaps three o’clock, he always rose and left the chamber to take his paralyzed wife out for an airing. Generally he brought her, with infinite tenderness, to the Capitol grounds, seated her on a bench in a pleasant shade, and no young lover could try more sedulously than he to amuse and comfort her. She seemed to be most happy when with him, and it was a familiar sight to see him picking flowers for her as they first peeped up in the early Spring. He intro-

duced me to a lady once — “ Mrs. C., a friend of my wife’s, madam ; need I say more ? ”

I met him at an unusual hour one day going toward the Senate, and said, “ You are unusually late, are you not ? ” “ Yes,” said he, “ my wife would not let me go until I took her to Jessie Anne’s (Mrs. Frémont). Jessie Anne is a charming woman, and my wife is a judge of women, madam—a judge of women.” He had a habit of accentuating his opinions or remarks by repetition. He was one of the very few great men who did not lose something by close proximity ; he certainly was a power among men.

Not far from Mr. Benton sat Dixon H. Lewis, of Alabama, one of the brightest men of his day, and intellectually and untiringly active ; but he weighed, before he had attained his greatest size, five hundred pounds, and must have weighed more when I first saw him. A chair was made for him, because he could not use those of ordinary size. He always commanded the confidence of his party and State, and the attention of the Senate.

Then there was John Bell, of Tennessee, and honest John Davis, of Massachusetts—kindly dignified gentlemen ; James M. Mason and R. M. T. Hunter, of Virginia ; splendid old Colonel Butler, of South Carolina, whose

head was as white as cotton, though his eyes were bright, his eyebrows black and strongly marked, and his brave spirit was as young as the youngest of the Senators ; David Atchison, a solemn, literal, tender man of a tall ungainly figure. He was the friend of Mr. Davis's boyhood ; King, of Alabama, a man as elegant as he was sound and sincere ; General Dodge, under whom Mr. Davis had served in the West ; he was straight, active, prompt, and had a certain wariness of manner which suggested an Indian hunter, which he had been for the best part of his life ; and General Augustus Dodge his son ; Mr. Pearce, of Maryland, a refined scholarly man, to whom the institutions for promoting science in America owed very much, and who to his friends and faith was true in every regard ; Mr. Simon Cameron, cheerful and wily ; gentle, sensible Mr. Bradbury, of Maine ; Colonel Dix, of New York, another one of Mr. Davis's old friends, who looked very reserved and soldierly among the political men about him ; Reverdy Johnson, of Maryland, a witty, graceful man, eloquent and sympathetic in the extreme—his appearance was somewhat marred by one eye having been injured in a duel—he was universally beloved by the gentlemen of the Senate ; with these were many others of renown. One tall

form "when seen became a part of sight"—that of Sam Houston. He was considerably over the ordinary height—six feet four at least. He had a noble figure and handsome face, but he had forgotten Polonius's advice, "Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, but not express'd in fancy." He rejoiced in a catamount skin waistcoat; it was very long-waisted, and his coat was left ostentatiously open to show it. Another waistcoat, which he alternated with the catamount, was of a glowing scarlet cloth. His manner was very swelling and formal. When he met a lady he took a step forward, then bowed very low, and in a deep voice said, "Lady, I salute you."

It was an embarrassing kind of thing, for it was performed with the several motions of a fencing lesson. If she chanced to please him, at the same or the next interview he generally took a small snakeskin pouch from his pocket and pulled out from it a little wooden heart, the size of a twenty-five cent piece, and presented it with, "Lady, let me give you my heart." These hearts he whittled all day long in the Senate, and had a jeweller to put a little ring in them. There was a certain free, stolid manner that suggested his long residence with the Indians. A favorite story of his was that he met Mr.

Davis at a sutler's store in the West, and introduced himself to him. After talking a little while with him, General Houston said, "The future United States Senator salutes the future President." My husband remembered something of the kind, but not clearly enough to state it.

As will be seen, the Senate was made up of more than ordinarily respectable men, and a more imposing deliberative body one could hardly find. It was a severe ordeal for a young man to pass when he engaged one of these dignified old men in a debate, who, to great acquirements, added stores of memories, and who often explained crises in the political world from the stand-point of the responsible agents.

It was the 21st of February, in this year, that ex-President John Quincy Adams sank in his seat on the floor of the House. As he was borne to the Vice-President's room he murmured, "This is the last of earth—I am composed." He died, after lying insensible for two days. Alert, determined, useful, and eloquent to the last hour of his service in the House, he was mourned by all who knew him.

Mr. Davis left Washington without unnecessary delay and travelled post homeward.

Our return was over the same perilous way, called then "The National Route," over which we had climbed so painfully the cold December of 1845; but now the whole mountain sides were rosy with the blossoms of the laurel, and nothing could have been more attractive than the scenery.

One day we heard a rumbling noise in front of us, and in a few minutes caught up with Duncan's battery going down to Mexico. Mr. Davis got out of the stage, and had a few moments' eager conversation with the fair-haired stripling who sat on the caisson, and then came back alert and flushed by the anticipation of his prospective campaign, which seemed even to me to take shape, and become real after I saw the first harbinger of war. During the greater part of the journey Mr. Davis studied a little pocket edition of military tactics, and, when I remonstrated, explained agreeably the mysteries of enfilading, breaking column, hollow squares, and what not, and I felt that there was "blood upon that hand." When we reached home, Colonel Davis set about arranging his plantation affairs so as to be absent a year or more from home. He and James Pemberton had a long and anxious conversation upon the advisability of James accompanying him; and James decided the matter himself, as he be-



came satisfied, after counting over all the arguments, pro and con, that I should need his protection and the interest of the place might suffer in his absence. So my brother-in-law offered one of his negroes, named Jim Green, as a servant, and with an Arabian horse named Tartar, for himself, and a stout serviceable one for Jim, my husband left home to join his regiment in New Orleans. As there are plenty of unsophisticated country brides nowadays, it is needless to say what the parting cost us, and how sad it was.

No material could have been more favorable for the hot work they had to do than that of the First Mississippi Regiment. It was composed of the young men of the State whose names were well known by the reputations their fathers had achieved. The privates, most of them, took their servants to do the drudgery of the camp. They were enlisted for a year, the longest period then asked. My brother, Joseph Davis Howell, was a private in the regiment, and great was our terror lest his six feet seven inches would make him a mark for the enemy. Robert Davis, a nephew, was also a private. Colonel Davis joined the First Mississippi Regiment on the 21st of July, 1846, when they were in camp below New Orleans, whither they had proceeded before his arrival in Mississippi.

On the 26th of July, they sailed on the steamship Alabama, and, after a favorable voyage, landed at Brazos, St. Iago, within seven miles of Point Isabel, where they encamped and remained until the 2d of August.

It was a sandy neck of land, covered with mounds blown up by the northers that swept the country with great force. All the water the regiment used was obtained by digging holes in the sides of these mounds, from which it trickled, but it was somewhat brackish, and the heat was intense. The men had been unaccustomed to hardship, and so much illness resulted from the exposure that by August 9th they had lost by discharge and illness forty men. As soon as the regiment landed, however, Colonel Davis began a rigid course of discipline, and the officers' "awkward-squad" drill was as sternly insisted upon as that of the soldiers.

While they were there, sometimes every tent in camp was prostrated by the norther, and during its prevalence great confusion reigned in camp, as in their exposed position the sharp dry sand blew into the men's eyes, and the keen cold wind pierced them. My husband never could control his risibles when he told of a certain civilian colonel who did not know how to pitch his tent.

After he retired a norther blew it and the rest of the regimental tents of his command down over their inmates. They were all greatly startled and rushed out in their night-clothes. The greatest confusion prevailed, and in the darkness no one missed the colonel, but presently he was descried creeping cautiously out from under the *débris*. When he gained his feet he began to prance up and down in front of the men, crying aloud, with chattering teeth, "My men, if you are afraid just look at me ; see how cool I am ;" and then he would strike his breast and repeat, "only see how c-o-o-l I am." But the shock was so great to him that it was some time before he could recognize his officers.

After three weary weeks of drilling, with discomforts of all kinds to men and officers, under a burning sun, the regiment took up its line of march and reached the mouth of the Rio Grande, August 12th, about nine miles distant from the Brazos. There they again encamped, awaiting means of transportation to Camargo, where they were to join General Zachary Taylor, and proceed immediately to Monterey. My brother, Joseph Davis Howell, wrote from this place: "I think, if there is anything to be done at all, that our regiment will have the opportunity of being called into service, for we are said to

be the most orderly, quiet, and best-drilled regiment that has come here."

At the mouth of the Rio Grande they took the steamer for Camargo.

An anecdote was told me by one of the Mississippi Regiment of an incident that happened here, by which it would seem in that day the rights of property in a hostile country were rigidly guarded.

The men had been living on salt meat and bread, and were hungry for vegetables of any kind. About a quarter of a mile from the camp of the First Mississippi was a field of very fine corn, just in the "roasting-ear stage." One man espied it, and "the whole regiment settled on it like a drove of mules and did not leave an ear. I saw the Colonel coming and hid mine under a bush ; but he was in such a tearing rage and asked me where the rest were that I pointed over the fence and made tracks for camp. That night he made us a speech, and told us that private rights must and should be respected. So he found out the owner of the corn and paid for the crop."

I may say here, without fear of inaccuracy, that the First Mississippi Regiment, from the Colonel down to the last private, returned home without one article belonging to a citizen of Mexico. The sacred silver and gold vessels and the Church vestments studded

over with precious stones, were in an open room at Monterey and also at Saltillo. The image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, a large doll dressed in satin, was admired and examined, but left untouched, though the frock in which she was arrayed was worked in arabesques adorned with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds of great price, and she wore a necklace of immense pearls which were of several colors. Colonel Davis saw one of the soldiers in friendly conversation with an old priest, holding admiringly a gold reliquary, the top of which was rayed with diamonds, several hundred, he thought, altogether. The Mexicans felt and had perfect security for their property. War, has made great innovations upon the precepts of the Decalogue since then.

Mr. Davis thus described the condition of General Taylor and his army at this time :

“The Mexicans evacuated Matamoras, and General Taylor took peaceable possession, May 18th. Though responsibility for the war might still be debated, the fact of its existence could not be disputed, and as the Rio Grande, except at time of flood, offered little obstacle to predatory incursions, it was obviously sound policy to press the enemy back upon the border. General Taylor moved forward to Camargo, on the San Juan, a tributary of the

Rio Grande. This last-named river rose so as to enable steam-boats to transport troops and supplies, so that by September a sufficiently large force of volunteers had reported at General Taylor's head-quarters to justify a farther march into the interior ; but the move must be by land, and for that there was far from adequate transportation."

Upon reaching General Taylor's head-quarters Colonel Davis found a hearty welcome, and informed General Taylor of the agreement to which the President had kindly consented, that Colonel Davis should stay with General Taylor and not be subject to orders from any other head of a corps d'armée. Whether the brave old General had become too famous, or that an action was not expected to occur in that wing of the army, no one knew ; but General Scott was daily diminishing General Taylor's force by taking every effective regiment he could get to make an attack upon the City of Mexico. General Wool, at a dinner at our house years afterward, spoke of it as "when General Scott drew all our teeth and left us to meet the Mexicans." As soon as the proper disposition of troops could be made, General Taylor hired "Mexican packers" to supplement the little transportation on hand. He was able to add one division of volunteers to

the regulars of his command, and with a force of 6,625 men, of all arms, he marched against Monterey, a fortified town of great natural strength and garrisoned by 10,000 men under General Ampudia.

“ Soon after his arrival Ampudia, the Mexican general at Matamoras, made a threatening demand that General Taylor should withdraw his troops beyond Mexico, to which he replied that his position had been taken by order of his Government and would be maintained.

“ On September 19th he encamped before the town, and on the 21st commenced the attack. On the fifth day General Ampudia proposed to surrender. Commissioners were appointed, and terms of capitulation agreed upon by which the enemy were to retire beyond a specified line, and the United States forces were not to advance beyond that line during the next eight weeks, or until the pleasure of the respective Governments should be known. By some strange misconception the United States Government disapproved of the arrangements, and ordered that the armistice should be terminated, by which we lost whatever had been gained in the interests of peace by the generous terms of the capitulation, and got nothing; for, during the short time which remained unexpired, no provision

had been, or could be made, to enable General Taylor to advance into the heart of Mexico. Presuming that such must be the purpose of the Government, he assiduously strove to collect the means needful for that object. When his preparations were well-nigh perfected General Scott was sent to Mexico with orders which enabled him at discretion to strip General Taylor of both troops and material of war."

Secretary Marcy and General Taylor had a sharp controversy, conducted by a series of letters, about the capitulation, and General Taylor, much to the astonishment of the public, had decidedly the advantage of Governor Marcy, who was a master of fence. Mr. Davis was at the camp-fire when General Taylor wrote it, and said:

"General Taylor's reply to Secretary Marcy's strictures, in regard to the capitulation of Monterey, exhibited such vigor of thought and grace of expression that many attributed it to a member of his staff who had a literary reputation, but it was written by his own hand, in the open air, by his camp-fire at Victoria.



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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE STORMING OF MONTEREY, 1846.

THE army arrived at Walnut Springs, two or three miles from Monterey, September 19, 1846. Two days afterward offensive operations were begun. They ended in the capitulation of Monterey, a city strongly fortified and stubbornly defended. Mr. John Savage, in his "Living Representative Men," gives a brilliant account of the part taken in these operations by the Mississippi Rifles. "In the storming of Monterey," he writes, "Colonel Davis and his riflemen played a most gallant part. The storming of one of its strongest forts (Taneria), on the 21st of September, was a desperate and hard-fought fight. The Mexicans had dealt such death by their cross-fires that they ran up a new flag in exultation and in defiance of the assaults which at this time were being made in front and rear. The Fourth Artillery, in the advance, had been terribly cut up; but the Mississippians and Tennesseans pressed steadily forward. Under a galling fire of copper grape they

approached to within a hundred yards of the fort, when they were lost in a cloud of smoke.

“ McClung, meeting a company which formerly had been under his command, dashed on, followed by Captain Willis. Anticipating General Quitman, Colonel Davis, about the same time, gave the order to charge. With wild desperation his men followed him. The escalade was made with the fury of a tempest, the men flinging themselves upon the guns of the enemy. Sword in hand, McClung has sprung over the ditch. After him dashes Davis, cheering on the Mississippians, and then Campbell with his Tennesseans and others, brothers in the fight and rivals for its honors. Then was wild work. The assault was irresistible. The Mexicans, terror-stricken, fled like an Alpine village from the avalanche, and, taking position in a strong fortified building, some seventy-five yards in the rear, opened a heavy fire of musketry. But, like their mighty river, nothing could stay the Mississippians; they are after the Mexicans. Davis and McClung are simultaneously masters of the fortifications, having got in by different entrances. In the fervor of victory the brigade does not halt; but, led on by Colonel Davis, are preparing to charge on the second post (El Diablo), about three hundred yards in the rear, when they are re-

strained by Quitman. This desperate conflict lasted two hours. The charge of the Mississippi Rifle Regiment, without bayonets, upon Fort Taneria, gained for the State a triumph which stands unparalleled. Placed in possession of El Diablo on the dawn of the 23d, Colonel Davis was exposed to a sharp fire from a half-moon redoubt, about one hundred and fifty yards distant, which was connected with heavy stone buildings and walls adjoining a block of the city. Returning the fire, he proceeded with eight men to reconnoitre the ground in advance. Having reported, he was ordered, with three companies of his regiment, and one of the Tennesseans, to advance on the works. When they reached the half-moon work, a tremendous fire was opened from the stone buildings in the rear. Taking a less exposed position, Davis was reinforced, and, the balance of the Mississippians coming up, the engagement became general in the street, while from the house-tops a heavy fire was kept up by the Mexicans. 'The gallant Davis, leading the advance with detached parties, was rapidly entering the city, penetrating into buildings, and generally driving the enemy from the position,' when General Henderson and the Texan Rangers, dismounted, entered the city, and, through musketry and grape, made their

way to the advance. The conflict increased, and still Davis continued his command through the street to within a square of the Grand Plaza, when, the afternoon being far advanced, General Taylor withdrew the Americans to the captured fort."

## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE STORMING OF MONTEREY—REPORT OF MR. DAVIS.

PROFESSOR WILLIAM PRESTON JOHNSTON, the son of the distinguished General Albert Sidney Johnston, in the life of his father, furnishes another account of the storming of Monterey, written by Mr. Davis in a private letter.

The Professor thus quotes: "The first attack was made on Fort Taneria, a stone building covered by a low and hastily constructed redoubt. Twigg's brigade, led by Colonel Garland, was in advance, and, after a brief attempt, was moved out to the right in a cornfield. Then the Tennesseans and Mississippians moved up. The former were brought into line to the left of the redoubts, the Mississippians on their right, and in front of the work. The firing commenced on our side, and was continued on that of the enemy. In the redoubts musketeers lined the breastworks between the pieces of artillery, and, on the flat roof of the Taneria, musketeers in large numbers fired over the heads of men in

the redoubt. After firing a few minutes it was perceptibly our best policy to storm the covering work, and I ordered my men to advance. Lieutenant-Colonel McClung had been the captain of the company raised in the Tombigbee Valley, and which was on the left of the centre. He sprang up before it and called out, 'Tombigbee boys, follow me !' The whole regiment moved forward—that company most rapidly—and Lieutenant-Colonel McClung and Lieutenant Patterson first sprang upon the breastwork. The Mexicans ran hastily out of the redoubt to the stone building in the rear ; and we pursued them so closely that I reached the gate as they were closing it, and, jumping against it, forced it open. The cry immediately went up of surrender, and the officer supposed to be in command advanced and delivered his sword.

“ After the capture of the redoubts and the Fort Taneria, I followed the flying Mexicans with a large part of my regiment to attack the Fort El Diablo, and when near to it was ordered back by General Quitman, the brigade commander and director of our division. It was behind a long wall and under cross-fire of the artillery of the enemy's salients on our left. I approached General Johnston and told him I had been recalled when about to take the salient on our left ; that we were uselessly



exposed where we were, and said, 'If not to the left, then let the right salient be attacked.' He answered with his usual calm manner and quick perception: 'We cannot give any orders; but if you will move your regiment to the right place, the rest may follow you.' 'I moved off, across a small stream, and through a field, to the front of the *tête de pont*, which covered the front of the Purissima Bridge, where I met Captain Field, of the United States Infantry, with his company, and Colonel Mansfield, of the United States Engineers. Under their advice a plan was formed for immediate attack; and while we were making the needful dispositions, General Hammer, who had, in the meantime, succeeded to the command of the division—General Butler having been wounded—came up with his command, and ordered me to retire. Both Colonel Mansfield and I remonstrated with him, and endeavored to show him the importance of our position. He was not convinced, but persisted in his own view. My men were withdrawn from the several points assigned to them, but before this could be done the division had gone a considerable distance. Captain Field withdrew with me, and was killed, while crossing the open field, by fire from the main fort. The field was inclosed by a high fence made of chaparral bushes,

beaten down between upright posts. My regiment (the First Mississippi) was following the movement of the division, and some distance in the rear, when the Mexican lancers, seeing the movement from off the field of battle, came from the direction of the Black Fort, and, passing behind the column to a place where the fence was old and low, leaped into the cornfield and commenced slaughtering stragglers and wounded men. I halted my regiment, formed line to the rear, and advanced on the enemy, firing. The effect of this attack was the sudden flight of the lancers, leaving a number of killed and wounded, their leader being of the killed. General Johnston afterward spoke of it as a remarkable event in war.

“ During the passage through the cornfield General Hamer moved on until he reached a point where the fence was too high to be crossed by horsemen. A deep irrigating ditch was before them, and the lancers in their rear. Your father told me that the signs were such as precedes a rout, and he felt that his hour was near. His only weapon was a sword I had received from the commanding officer when we burst open the gate of Fort Taneria and received the surrender of the garrison, which I subsequently handed to him. Other reliance had he none. Just then, he said, he

heard some one giving orders in tones welcome and familiar to his ears, and saw the Mississippi Riflemen formed and advancing on the enemy." \*

On the third day after the attack commenced the enemy announced a willingness to surrender on terms, and General Taylor appointed three commissioners, viz., Governor Henderson, of Texas, General Worth, of the United States Army, and Colonel Davis, Mississippi Rifles, to meet a like number who should be appointed by the Mexican General, Ampudia, to arrange the terms of capitulation, which were as follows :

TERMS OF THE CAPITULATION OF THE CITY OF MONTEREY, THE CAPITAL OF NUEVA LEON, AGREED UPON BY THE UNDERSIGNED COMMISSIONERS, TO WIT: General Worth, of the United States Army, General Henderson, of the Texan Volunteers, and Colonel Davis, of the Mississippi Riflemen, on the part of Major-General Taylor, commander-in-chief of the United States forces ; and General Requena and General Ortego, of the Army of Mexico, and Señor Manuel M. Llano, Governor of Nueva Leon, on the part of Señor-General Don Pedro Ampudia, commander-in-chief of the Army of the North of Mexico.

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\* The Life of Albert Sidney Johnston. By William Preston Johnston.

*Article 1.* As the legitimate result of the operations before this place, and the present position of the contending armies, it is agreed that the city, the fortifications, the cannon, the munitions of war, and all other public property, with the undermentioned exceptions, be surrendered to the commanding general of the United States forces now at Monterey.

*Article 2.* That the Mexican forces be allowed to retain the following arms, to wit: The commissioned officers, their side-arms, the infantry, their arms and accoutrements; the cavalry, their arms and accoutrements; the artillery, one field battery, not to exceed six pieces, with twenty-one rounds of ammunition.

*Article 3.* That the Mexican armed forces retire within seven days from this date beyond the line formed by the pass of the Riconda, the city of Linares, and San Fernando de Pusos.

*Article 4.* That the citadel of Monterey be evacuated by the Mexican, and occupied by the American forces to-morrow at ten o'clock.

*Article 5.* To avoid collisions, and for mutual convenience, that the troops of the United States will not occupy the city until the Mexican forces have withdrawn, except for hospital and storage purposes.

*Article 6.* That the forces of the United States will not advance beyond the line specified in Article 3, before the expiration of eight weeks, or until the orders of the respective Governments can be received.

*Article 7.* That the public property to be delivered shall be turned over and received by officers appointed by the commanding generals of the two armies.

*Article 8.* That all doubts as to the meaning of any of the preceding articles shall be solved by an equitable construction, and on principles of liberality to the retiring army.

*Article 9.* That the Mexican flag, when struck at the citadel, may be saluted by its own battery.

W. J. WORTH,

*Brig.-Gen. U. S. A.*

J. PINKNEY HENDERSON,

*Maj. Gen. comdg. Texan Volunteers.*

JEFFERSON DAVIS,

*Colonel Mississippi Riflemen.*

JOSE M. ORTEGA,

T. REQUENA,

MANL. M. LLANO.

Approved:

PEDRO AMPUDIA,

Z. TAYLOR,

*Maj.-Gen. U. S. A., Comdg.*

Dated at Monterey, September 24, 1846.

Of this capitulation Mr. Davis wrote : " As to the wisdom of the course adopted in this capitulation men did, and probably will, differ. For myself, I approved it when it was done, and now, viewing it after the fact, I can see much to convince me in the view I originally took. We gained possession of a fort, large and well constructed. We had neither a battering train nor intrenching tools to reduce it ; to carry the work by storm must have cost us many men, when we had not one to spare. We gained a large amount of powder and fixed ammunition. Much of this was stored in the main cathedral, and the fire of our mortars directed against that building must have produced an explosion which would have destroyed the ammunition, a great number of houses which have been useful to us, and with the enemy's troops in the plaza, must have destroyed many of the advance of our own forces."

Colonel Davis told me many anecdotes of the battle, but out of them I have retained but two in such continuity as will enable me to repeat them. He said that after the Black Fort had been taken his men forced the doors of the dwellings to reach the flat roofs and fire from them. He found a number of women in one room, and one of them held up a little blue-eyed baby, and told him, " This

is like you—do not kill it, but take it for your own.” He had not time to explain, and left her wild with terror.

While the regiment was firing at the roof of the opposite house, which was in like manner occupied by Mexican soldiers, he noticed a little trim officer blazing with embroidery, in full uniform, standing in front of his men and urging them on, but they did not seem ardent for the fight. One of the Mississippi regiment raised his rifle to shoot him, but he looked so young and gallant the Colonel said, “Cover him, but do not shoot.” However, the officer was so much in earnest that he jumped on the edge of the roof and was followed by some of his men. The dread of their shooting our soldiers caused the order to “fire” to be given, and the rifleman, as he saw the poor fellow drop in the street a gleaming, shapeless mass, remarked, “Colonel, I saved him.”

A cannon at the plaza was trained on this street, and fired every few minutes, raking the centre of the street. As the regiment had done all the execution they could from the house-tops, and the street must be crossed, Colonel Davis ordered them to follow him and cross between the discharges of the cannon. He took the lead. The regiment followed by twos and threes under cov-

er of the smoke, and all turned into another street safely, and continued the fight.

Perhaps contemporary letters give a more vivid idea of the conduct of the war and of persons, and I have made quotations from some written at that time.

*Letter from Joseph Davis Howell to his Mother.*

“ CAMARGO.

“ . . . I now give you the camp news. General Wool has arrived near Monterey, with the intention of joining his forces with those of General Taylor, when they will march to Victoria. General Taylor has already started for the place of rendezvous. General Worth is in Saltillo with his brigade, which place he intends to garrison. I do not know what troops will be left in Monterey. I suspect, however, the Louisville Legion. . . . Report says that General Santa Anna is on the march to Victoria with 15,000 men at the least calculation. Of course he will be joined by those who were under Ampudia, about 10,000; so I think our boys have a fair chance for another ‘fandango’ at Victoria. We are in hourly expectation of an attack here; there is an alarm every night. We have fortified the town strongly, however, and if they do attack us, God have mercy



upon them, for they would meet but little from us."

*From Colonel Davis to Mrs. Davis.*

"MONTEREY, October 5, 1846.

" . . . My health is very good and my ignorance of our future movements as entire as your own. The Mexican General assured us, before the terms of capitulation were agreed upon, that commissioners from the United States had been received at Mexico. If this was half true a portion of the forces here must be soon disbanded. Your brother is well."

*Joseph Davis Howell to his Mother.*

"CAMP ALLEN, NEAR MONTEREY, October 13, 1846.

" . . . I am very much afraid that the hope expressed in my former letter, that we would shortly return home, was ill founded. I see no prospects of it at present; in fact everything that I can see or learn has a war-like tendency. There is a proclamation now in the camp, by Santa Anna, or at least it is attributed to him, which is anything but peaceful. It declares his intentions to prosecute the war to the utmost extremity; to use his own words, 'he will gather the laurels for the Mexican Government by planting his flag upon the banks of the Sabine.' Now,

so far as his boast is concerned it is worthy of very little consideration, except as an evidence of the warlike animosity still existing in the minds of the Mexican people against the United States. . . . If the time of our regiment expires, and our Colonel even then thinks that we could be useful, there is not a man in his regiment who would not sacrifice his life to obey him, so much has his gallant conduct raised him in their estimation. The degree of power his coolness, courage, and discretion have acquired for him in the army generally would hardly be believed at home. Everything difficult of decision is left to him, and I verily believe that if he should tell his men to jump into a cannon's mouth they would think it all right, and would all say, 'Colonel Jeff,' as they call him, 'knows best, so hurrah, boys, let's go ahead.' He is always in front of his men, and ready to be the first to expose himself; and moreover, he has taken them into so many tight places, and got them out safely, that they begin to think if they follow him they will be sure to succeed, and they think so, too, with some reason, for during the conflict we attacked, and several times took, places and fortifications from which regular troops, greatly outnumbering us, had been three times repulsed by the Mexicans with considerable loss of life.

I never wish to be commanded by a truer soldier than Colonel Davis."

A short extract is subjoined from the report of General Taylor on the battle of Monterey :

"I desire also to notice Generals Hamer and Quitman, commanding brigades in General Butler's division; Lieutenant-Colonel Garland and Wilson, commanding brigades in General Twigg's division; Colonels Mitchell, Campbell, Davis, and Wood, commanding the Ohio, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Second Texas Regiments respectively; and Senior Majors Allen and Abercrombie, commanding Third, Fourth, and First Regiments of infantry, all of whom served under my eye and conducted their commands with coolness and gallantry against the enemy."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### •AFTER THE BATTLE OF MONTEREY.

AFTER the battle of Monterey my anxiety and depression were so great, and my health so much impaired by this and other causes, that my husband obtained sixty days' leave of absence, which, in those days of slow travel, were required in order to spend two weeks in the United States. In an entry in Adjutant Griffith's reports, dated "Camp Allen, near Monterey, October 19th," I find this note: "Colonel Davis left on furlough for sixty days." He left the camp with a corporal's guard, went at great risk but without accident to Camargo, and rode Tartar down to take him home, for fear he might be shot in battle. When at the Brazos it was necessary to transfer the horse from a lighter to the ship. The sailors struck him, to force him to jump on the vessel. He reared and snorted, but the blow only enraged him. He could not be induced to stir. Colonel Davis told the sailors to let him alone, and, standing on the ship held the bridle, calling him

gently by name. Tartar crouched like a cat, watched for the instant when the lighter and the ship were on a level, and then sprang lightly to his master's side, amid the cheers of the sailors.

This same horse, when the rein was thrown over his neck at the battle of Monterey, instead of straying off, as was expected, to the regimental quarters, galloped into a re-entering angle of Fort Teneria, and stood trembling, but perfectly still, until the battle was over.

During our prolonged absence from home, of course many things had gone ill; but our faithful James had done his best, and, at all events, there was little opportunity, during Colonel Davis's short stay at Brierfield, in which to rectify mistakes. During this time, however, he made his will, and consulted James as to what he wished done in the matter of his liberty. James said he would prefer, in case of the death of his master, to take care of his mistress, but wanted his freedom if anything should happen to her. The will was framed to suit his wishes, and a bequest of land or money, as he might choose, added thereto.

In "the days that are no more," so confiding and affectionate was the relation of the master and the slave, and we who personally

loved many of them, cannot now easily become reconciled to the attitude of alienation in which the negroes stand toward us.

The time for Mr. Davis's return rolled around all too soon. To replace Tartar, he took Richard, a noble bay with black points, and sailed again for Mexico. He met, *en route*, Colonel Thomas Crittenden, of Kentucky, afterward a general in the Federal Army, whose account of Buena Vista will be given here, and, by taking turns with each other, one sitting up while the other slept, they avoided assassination, and reached Saltillo, safely, January 4, 1847.

Mr. Davis mentioned a peculiar fact while telling the incidents of this story.

When he passed down to Camargo, going home, there were constant alarms of guerillas, who hid in the chaparral that skirted the road and fired upon Americans passing by. He came near ordering his guard to shoot a Mexican, standing erect in a chaparral bush, but upon a closer inspection found he was dead. On his return the figure was still there, not in the least decomposed. This was the first of many occasions upon which he noticed that the dead Mexicans did not decay like the Americans, but seemed to dry up, and he attributed it to their eating so much red pepper and the dry climate. During Colonel

Davis's absence the regiment was commanded by Major A. B. Bradford.

"On Monday, December 14th, the army began their march to Saltillo.\* About fifty-eight miles from Monterey an express from General Worth brought news that Santa Anna with his forces was advancing upon Saltillo. Considerable excitement and numerous rumors in camp this night."

"Friday, December 18th: Remained in camp near Montmorelles, all this day. General Twigg's division returned to Monterey, General Taylor and staff accompanying him. General Quitman made chief of the division proceeding on to Victoria. Mississippi and Georgia regiments, with Baltimore battalion, forming two brigades, under Colonel Jackson, acting brigadier-general. Two Tennessee regiments, first brigade, under Colonel Campbell, acting brigadier-general."

"December 19th: Reached camp Novales last night. Extremely cold, and cool all this day; almost a frost this evening. Lancers seen hovering near the camp — supposed to be a body of 400 or 500. Not a Mexican soldier have I seen since leaving Monterey."

"Monday, January 4th: Colonel J. Davis rejoined this regiment, and this day assumed the command."

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\* Richard Griffith's, Adjutant, Diary.

Mr. Davis's own account is here again quoted :

“ The projected campaign against the capital of Mexico was now to be from Vera Cruz up the steppes and against the fortifications which had been built to resist any anticipated invasion, instead of from Saltillo across the plains to the comparatively undefended rear of the capital. The difficulty on this route was the waterless space to be crossed, and against that General Taylor had ingeniously provided. According to instructions he went to Victoria, turned over his troops, except a proper escort, to return through a country of hostiles to Monterey. Then went to Agua Nueva, beyond Saltillo, where he was joined by General Wool with his command from Chihuahua.”

An extract of a letter from Agua Nueva, Mexico, 8th February, 1847, from Colonel Davis to me, expresses their impatience for the impending battle :

“ We are here on the table-lands of Mexico, at the foot of the Sierra Madre. We came expecting a host and battle, have found solitude and externally peace. The daily alarms of this frontier have ceased, the enemy I believe has retired to San Luis de Potosi, and we are waiting reinforcements, while General Scott is taking all who can be seized and in-



corporates them in his division of the army. We have a beautiful and healthy position, and are waiting only action or such excitement as reconciles man to repose.

“General Santa Anna saw the invitation offered by the withdrawal of General Taylor’s troops, and with a well appointed army, 20,000 strong, marched with the assurance of easily recovering their lost territory. General Taylor fell back to the narrow pass in front of the hacienda of Buena Vista, and here stood on the defensive. His force was 5,400 of all arms; but of those only three batteries of artillery, one squadron of dragoons, one mounted company of Texans, and one regiment of Mississippi riflemen had ever been under fire. Some skirmishing occurred on the 22d of February, and a general assault along the whole line was made on the morning of the 23d. The battle, with a varying fortune, continued throughout the day. At evening the enemy retired, and during the night retreated by the route he had advanced, having suffered much by the casualties of the battle and still more by desertion. So Santa Anna returned with but a remnant of the regular army of Mexico, on which reliance had been placed to repel invasion. Thenceforward peace was undisturbed in the valley of the Rio Grande.”

*Colonel Jefferson Davis to Mrs. Davis.*

"SALTILLO, February 25, 1847.

". . . I wrote to you a few days since anticipating a battle. We have had it. The Mississippians did well. I fear you may feel some anxiety about me, and write to say that I was wounded in the right foot, and remained on the field so long afterward that the wound has been painful, but is by no means dangerous. I hope soon to be up again. My friend, Mr. Crittenden, will write on this sheet to brother Joe, and give him more particulars."

*Thomas L. Crittenden to Mr. Joseph E. Davis.*

"SALTILLO, February 25, 1847.

"DEAR SIR: We have had a glorious battle and victory. On the evening of the 22d, the Mexicans, commanded by Santa Anna in person, having advanced to our position (which was about eight miles south of Saltillo, at a place called Buena Vista), the fight commenced between some light troops. This was, however, a mere skirmish, with which the main body of neither had anything to do, and was soon stopped by darkness.

"About sunrise in the morning, however, the armies engaged and fought until three o'clock P.M., the object of Santa Anna, with an

army of 20,000 men, being to drive General Taylor, who commanded barely 5,000 men, from his position. In this attempt, after the most desperate and gallant fighting, in which your brother bore a conspicuous part, Santa Anna was entirely foiled, and about midnight retreated with his army to Agua Nueva, about ten miles back, where he is now encamped with the remains, no doubt, of a defeated and demoralized army.

“The regiment commanded by your brother won the admiration of all, and suffered, of course, severely, at least one hundred casualties, and among them 40 killed, and that, too, when the regiment did not muster 300 men upon the field of battle. Your brother received early in the action a very painful wound in the right foot, but did not leave the field until the battle was over, and a very glorious battle was won.

“The Mexican loss must have been very heavy; I cannot give you the details however.

“I have spoken particularly, indeed exclusively, of the Mississippi regiment, because I have not time to give you an account of the gallantry of *almost* all our troops.

“Your brother's wound is not at all dangerous, but in all probability he will not be able to walk for several months, at least without a

crutch. Our gallant old General has silenced all fires, front and rear, and proven himself for the hundredth time a hero.

“Very respectfully yours, etc.,  
THOS. L. CRITTENDEN.

“P.S.—Your brother has just informed me that you and my father were old acquaintances and friends. I have been with your brother almost daily for several months, and have formed for him a great personal attachment; these things coupled, sir, make me feel toward you as an old acquaintance, and I may add even more, and subscribe myself

“Your friend,  
“THOS. L. CRITTENDEN.”

On February 23d the two armies met at Saltillo, and the following is the report of Colonel Jefferson Davis of the battle of Buena Vista:

“SALTILLO, MEXICO, March 2, 1847.

“SIR: In compliance with your note of yesterday I have the honor to present the following report of the service of the Mississippi Rifles on the 2d ultimo:

“Early in the morning of that day the regiment was drawn out from the head-quarters encampment, which stood in advance of, and overlooked, the town of Saltillo.

“ Conformably to instruction two companies were detached for the protection of that encampment, and to defend the adjacent entrance of the town. The remaining eight companies were put in march to return to the position of the preceding day, now known as the battle-field of Buena Vista. We had approached to within about two miles of that position, when the report of artillery firing, which reached us, gave assurance that a battle had been commenced. Excited by the sounds the regiment pushed rapidly forward, manifesting upon this, as upon other occasions, their more than willingness to meet the enemy.

“ At the first convenient place the column was halted for the purpose of filling the canteens with water, and the march being resumed, was directed toward the position which had been indicated to me on the previous evening as the post of our regiment. As we approached the scene of action, horsemen, recognized as of our troops, were seen running dispersed and confusedly from the field; and our first view of the line of battle presented the mortifying spectacle of a regiment of infantry flying disorganized from before the enemy. These sights, so well calculated to destroy confidence and dispirit troops just coming into action, it is my pride and pleas-

ure to believe only nerved the resolution of the regiment I have the honor to command.

“ Our order of march was in column of companies advancing by their centres. The point which had just been abandoned by the regiment alluded to was now taken as our direction. I rode forward to examine the ground upon which we were going to operate, and, in passing through the fugitives appealed to them to return with us and renew the fight, pointing to our regiment as a mass of men behind which they might securely form.

“ With a few honorable exceptions the appeal was as unheeded as the offers which, I am informed, were made by our men to give their canteens of water to those who complained of thirst, on condition that they would go back. General Wool was upon the ground, making great efforts to rally the men who had given way. I approached him and asked if he would send another regiment to sustain me in the attack upon the enemy before us. He was alone, and after promises of support went in person to send it.

“ Upon further examination I found that the slope we were ascending was intersected by a deep ravine, which uniting obliquely with a still larger one upon our right, formed, between them, a point of land difficult of access by us, but which, spreading into a plain

toward the base of the mountain, had easy communication with the main body of the enemy. This position, important from its natural strength, derived a far greater value from the relation it bore to our order of battle and line of communication with the rear. The enemy, in number many times greater than ourselves, supported by strong reserves, flanked by cavalry, and elated by recent success, was advancing upon it. The moment seemed to me critical, and the occasion to require whatever sacrifice it might cost to check the enemy.

“ My regiment having continued to advance was near at hand. I met and formed it rapidly into order of battle. The line then advanced in double-quick time, until within the estimated range of our rifles, when it was halted and ordered to ‘ fire advancing.’

“ The progress of the enemy was checked. We crossed the difficult chasm before us under a galling fire, and in good order renewed the attack upon the other side. The contest was severe—the destruction great upon both sides. We steadily advanced, and as the distance was diminished the ratio of loss increased rapidly against the enemy; he yielded and was driven back on his reserves. A plain now lay behind us—the enemy’s cavalry had passed around our right flank, which

rested on the main ravine, and gone to our rear. The support I had expected to join us was nowhere to be seen. I therefore ordered the regiment to retire, and went in person to find the cavalry, which, after passing round our right, had been concealed by the inequality of the ground. I found them, at the first point where the bank was practicable for horsemen, in the act of descending into the ravine—no doubt for the purpose of charging upon our rear. The nearest of our men ran quickly to my call, attacked this body and dispersed it with some loss. I think their commander was among the killed.

“The regiment was formed again into line of battle behind the first ravine we had crossed; soon after which we were joined upon our left by Lieutenant Kilbourn, with a piece of light artillery, and Colonel Lane’s Third Regiment of Indiana Volunteers.

“Lieutenant Kilbourn opened a brisk and very effective fire. The enemy immediately receded; we advanced, and he retired to the mountain.

“No senior officer of Lieutenant Kilbourn’s corps being present upon this occasion, it gives me pleasure to bear testimony of the valuable services he rendered, and to express my admiration of the professional skill and soldierly qualities he manifested.



“ We occupied the ground where the Mississippi regiment first met the enemy, when a heavy fire was opened upon us by a battery which the enemy had established near the centre of his line. The Indiana regiment was most exposed, and passed from the left into the ravine upon our left. The artillery retired to the battery from which it had been drawn. I had sent out some parties to examine the ground on which we had fought in the morning, for the purpose of bringing in the wounded. When these parties had returned our regiment retired by its left flank, and marched along the bank of the ravine heretofore noticed as being on our right. The Indiana regiment, in moving down the hollow, was concealed from the view of the enemy, who was probably thereby encouraged to make an attack.

“ We had proceeded but a short distance when I saw a large body of cavalry debouch from his cover on the left of the position from which we had retired, and advance rapidly upon us. The Mississippi regiment was filed to the right, and fronted in line across the plain; the Indiana regiment was formed on the bank of the ravine, in advance of our right flank, by which a *re-entering angle* was presented to the enemy. While this preparation was being made, Ser-

geant-Major Miller of our regiment was sent to Captain Sherman for one or more pieces of artillery from his battery.

“The enemy, who was now seen to be a body of richly caparisoned lancers, came forward rapidly, and in beautiful order—the files and ranks so closed as to look like a mass of men and horses. Perfect silence and the greatest steadiness prevailed in both lines of our troops, as they stood at shouldered arms awaiting an attack. Confident of success and anxious to obtain the full advantage of a cross-fire at a short distance, I repeatedly called to the men not to shoot.

“As the enemy approached his speed regularly diminished, until, when within eighty or one hundred yards, he had drawn up to a walk, and seemed about to halt. A few files fired without orders, and both lines then instantly poured in a volley so destructive that the mass yielded to the blow, and the survivors fled. Captain Sherman having come up with a field-piece from his battery, followed their retreat with a very effective fire until they fled beyond the range of his gun. Soon after this event a detachment of our artillery and cavalry rode up, and I was directed to co-operate with it in an attack upon the enemy at the base of the mountain. We advanced parallel to this detachment until it

halted. I then placed my men under such protection as the ground afforded from the constant fire of the enemy's artillery, to which we were exposed, to wait the further movement of the force with which we were to act. At this time the enemy made his last attack upon the right, and I received the General's order to march to that portion of the field.

"The broken character of the intervening ground concealed the scene of action from our view; but the heavy firing of musketry formed a sufficient guide for our course.

"After marching two or three hundred yards we saw the enemy's infantry advancing in three lines upon Captain Bragg's battery, which, though entirely unsupported, resolutely held its position, and met the attack with a fire worthy of the former achievement of the battery, and of the reputation of its meritorious commander. We pressed on, climbed the rocky slope of the plain on which this combat occurred, reached its brow so as to take the enemy in flank and reverse when he was about one hundred yards from the battery. Our first fire, raking each of his lines, and opening close upon his flank, was eminently destructive. His right gave way and he fled in confusion.

"In this last contest of the day my regiment equalled—it was impossible to exceed—my

expectations. Though worn down by many hours of fatigue and thirst, the ranks thinned by our heavy loss in the morning, they yet advanced upon the enemy with the alacrity and eagerness of men fresh to the combat. In every approbatory sense of these remarks I wish to be included a party of Colonel Bowles's Indiana regiment, which served with us during the greatest part of the day, under immediate command of an officer from that regiment whose gallantry attracted my particular attention, but whose name is, I regret, unknown to me. When hostile demonstrations had ceased I retired to a tent upon the field for surgical aid, having been wounded by a musket-ball when we first went into action. Our regiment remained inactive until evening, and was then ordered to the encampment of the previous night, under the command of Major Bradford.

"We had seen the enemy retire; but his numerical superiority over us would scarcely admit the supposition that he had finally retreated. After my arrival at our encampment, which was some time after dark, I directed Captain Rogers, with his company, K, and Lieutenant Russell, commanding Company D, to proceed with their commands to the field of battle, and to report to the commanding General for orders. These were the two

companies which had been left as a guard at head-quarters encampment, as stated in the beginning of this report. They had been threatened during the day by a strong detachment of the enemy's cavalry; but performed all the duties which belonged to their position, as will be seen by the accompanying statement of Captain Rogers, in a manner creditable to themselves and their regiment; but they were disappointed because they had not been with us in the battle of the day, and were gratified at the order to march upon night-service, and probably to a dangerous post.

“Every part of the battle having been fought under the eye of the commanding General, the importance and manner of any service it was our fortune to render will be best estimated by him. But in view of my own responsibility, it may be permitted me to say, in relation to our first attack upon the enemy, that I considered the necessity absolute and immediate. No one would have failed to perceive the hazard. The enemy in greatly disproportionate numbers was rapidly advancing. We saw no friendly troops coming to our support, and probably none except myself expected reinforcement. Under such circumstances the men cheerfully, ardently, entered into the conflict, and though we lost

in the single engagement more than thirty killed and forty wounded, the regiment never faltered nor moved except it was ordered. Had the expected reinforcement arrived, we could have prevented the enemy's cavalry from passing to our rear, results more decisive might have been obtained, and a part of our loss have been avoided.

“To enumerate the instances of gallantry and good conduct which I witnessed would exceed the limits proper to this communication, and yet could not fail to omit very many which occurred. I will therefore attempt no other discrimination than to make an exception of the two privates who were reported as ‘missing,’ and who have since been returned by the enemy, taken prisoners without a wound; and upon all others, both officers and men, I have the pleasure to confer my unqualified commendation.

“To Major Bradford I offer my thanks for the prompt and creditable manner in which he executed all the orders I gave him, and especially refer to the delicate duty assigned him of restoring order among the files of another regiment when rendered unsteady by the fire of the enemy's artillery.

“Adjutant Richard Griffith rendered me important aid, as well in his appropriate duties as by the intelligence and courage with which

he reconnoitred the enemy and gave me valuable information. I must also notice the good conduct of Sergeant-Major Miller and Quartermaster-Sergeant White of the regimental staff.

“First Lieutenant Mott, Acting Assistant Commissary of Subsistence, joined his company (Captain Taylor’s) and performed good service throughout the day. Second Lieutenant Slade, Acting Assistant Quartermaster, who was left in charge of his train at our encampment, it has been reported to me, when the enemy’s cavalry threatened our encampment, he formed his teamsters and others into a party, mounted them on wagon horses, and joined Lieutenant Shover of the artillery in his brilliant sortie, by which the enemy was driven from his position on our line of communication.

“Captain Sharp’s company, A, and Captain Delay’s company, F, having been on detached service when the battle of Monterey was fought, seemed anxious on this occasion to bring up any arrears in which they might be supposed to stand to the regiment. They formed the first division and did their duty nobly.

“Three of the companies were, by unavoidable causes, deprived of the presence of their captains on this occasion, viz. :

“Company C, commanded by Lieutenant Cook, whose gallantry at the storming of Monterey received my notice, and whose good conduct on the occasion is worthy of the highest commendation.

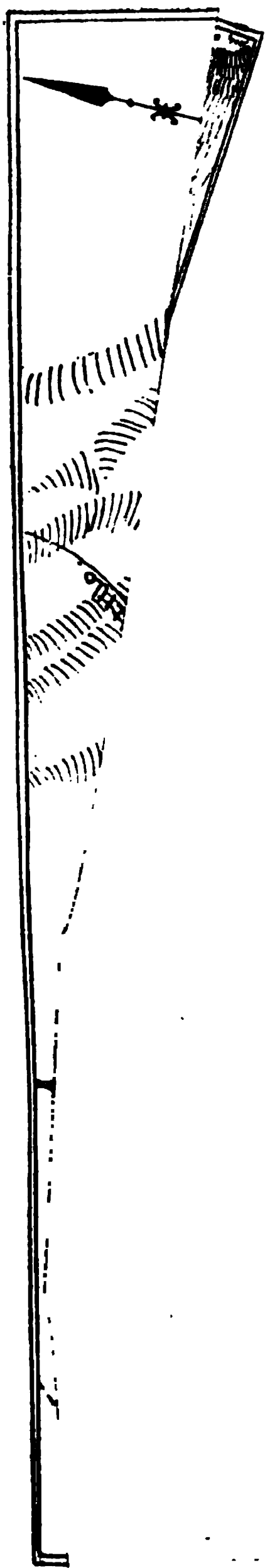
“Company E, commanded by Lieutenant Fletcher, who showed himself equal to all the emergencies of that eventful day.

“Company H, commanded by Lieutenant Moore, who so gallantly led it on the 28th of September in the storming of Monterey. Cool, brave, and well informed, he possessed my highest respect and entire confidence. He fell in our first engagement, and on our most advanced position. The command of the company devolved upon Lieutenant Clendenin (Captain-elect) who continued to lead it during the battle.

“Captain Taylor of Company I was present with his command throughout the day, and, as on former occasions proved himself worthy to be the leader of the gallant company. Captain Cooper with his company, B, upon the left flank of the regiment, seized every opportunity which his position gave him, and rendered distinguished service.

“Captain Downing joined his company, G, on the 22d at Buena Vista. He had heard at the Rinconada that we were about to be attacked, and though the road was be-







set by rancheros, he hastened forward and took command of his company in the morning. In the first engagement of the 23d this company was particularly distinguished, and fulfilled the expectations which its high state of discipline had warranted. Second Lieutenant McNulty was killed when leading a portion of the company in a charge. First Lieutenant Greaves and Second Lieutenant Hampton, for their gallantry in battle and uniform good conduct, deserve the highest consideration.

"There were many instances of both officers and men who, after being wounded, remained upon the field and continued to discharge their duties until active operations had ceased. Such was the case of Captain Sharp, who, though shot through both thighs, evinced so great reluctance to leave the field that he was permitted to remain and follow his company on horseback.

"Lieutenants Posey, Corwine, and Stockard were wounded, but set the valuable example of maintaining their posts. Such, also, was the conduct of Sergeants Scott of Company C, and Hollingsworth of Company A, of private Malone of Company F, and of others whose names have not been reported to me.

"In addition to the officers already com-

mended in this report, I would mention as deserving of especial consideration for their gallantry and general good conduct, Lieutenants Calhoun and Dill and Arthur and Harrison and Brown and Hughes.

“It may be proper for me to notice the fact that, early in the action, Colonel Bowles, of Indiana, with a small party from his regiment, which he stated was all of his men that he could rally, joined us, and expressed a wish to serve with my command. He remained with us throughout the day, and displayed much personal gallantry.

“Referring for casualties in my regiment to the list which has been furnished, I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

“Your obedient servant,

“JEFFERSON DAVIS,  
*Colonel Mississippi Rifles.*

“To MAJOR W. W. S. BLISS, *A. A. G.*”

When Colonel Davis was helped off his horse, in an almost fainting condition, his leg had swollen so that it filled his boot; pieces of his brass spur and of his stocking had been driven through his foot into the wound and became embedded there.

Captain Eustis, a friend and comrade, sat by him all night and kept a stream of cold water pouring over the wound, which, his surgeon

thought, prevented lockjaw from supervening.

General Taylor, when he was informed that Colonel Davis was killed, was so excited that he exclaimed, "I will never believe it," and sent one after another to inquire without waiting for an answer. The soft-hearted old hero found time to go himself after night to inquire after Colonel Davis, and began the interview saying: "My poor boy, I wish you had been shot in the body, you would have a better chance of recovering soon. I do not like wounds in the hands or feet, they cripple a soldier awfully."

Note from Dubuque *Herald*:

"When the news came to Dubuque of the victory over Santa Anna by old Zach, through the tact, skill, and bravery of Colonel Jefferson Davis, who was reported mortally wounded, there was such an enthusiastic celebration and glorification, chiefly on Davis's account, as has never since taken place, and the Iowa Legislature passed resolutions complimentary to Colonel Davis, upon the gallantry displayed by himself and his brave Mississippi Riflemen at the battle of Buena Vista."

Extracts from General Taylor's detailed report of the battle of Buena Vista:

“ March 6, 1847.

“ The Mississippi Riflemen, under Colonel Davis, were highly conspicuous for gallantry and steadiness, and sustained throughout the engagement the reputation of veteran troops. Brought into action against an immensely superior force, they maintained themselves for a long time unsupported, and with heavy loss, and held an important part of the field until reinforced.

“ Colonel Davis, though severely wounded, remained in the saddle until the close of the action. His distinguished coolness and gallantry, and the heavy loss of his regiment on this day, entitle him to the particular notice of the Government.”

From the report of General Wool :

“ HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION,  
Twenty miles South of Saltillo, Mexico,  
April 17, 1847.

“ To Colonel Davis and the Mississippi regiment under his command, whose services were conspicuous in the engagements in the rear of our left, great credit is due for the part they performed, and much praise for their conspicuous gallantry, which caused them to be a rallying-point for the force that was driven in from the left, and who, in connection with the Second Indiana, under its

gallant Colonel, constituted almost the only force opposed to the heavy column of the enemy.

“JOHN E. WOOL,  
*Brigadier General.*

“TO MAJOR W. S. BLISS, *A. A. G.*”

General Wool estimates General Taylor's army at Buena Vista at 4,600. The force of the enemy (including General Minon's lances) at 20,000 or more.

Mr. Estes, from whom I have quoted later, said: “During the progress of the battle of Buena Vista, just after the first engagement of the Mississippi Rifles with a large portion of Santa Anna's army, and before the Mexican legions had recovered from the shock which hurled them back upon their reserve forces, Colonel Davis ordered the Ordnance Sergeant to serve his men with more ammunition. Each man was provided with sixty cartridges, twenty-four of which were distributed ready for use in the top of the cartridge-boxes, and thirty-six in packages placed in the receptacle attached to the cartridge-boxes, to be used as occasion required. This stock had been entirely exhausted in the first charge made by the regiment and in the subsequent repulse of the enemy. The Mexican bugles were already sounding and their drums beating for

another attack upon our depleted lines when it was discovered that the cartridges just issued were fully one size too large in calibre for our rifles. Mr. Davis, though bleeding from his wound, had not left the field, and at his suggestion, in an incredibly short time, every man of his regiment had his cartridges spread out on the ground, and using the rocky face of the portion of the field as an anvil, was hammering away to reduce the cartridges to the proper size. The cartridges so made available were used in repelling the fearful charge that was soon made on our lines, where, history says, Mr. Davis and his regiment again saved the battle.

Mr. Davis remembered this incident well, but no mention of it has ever been made in any of the written descriptions of the battle.

The following account of Buena Vista was written by a young Mississippian scarcely more than a boy at the time, William E. Estis, Sergeant, Company E, First Mississippi Rifles. He was conspicuous for his gallantry at all times, and much esteemed by his colonel:

“About the last of December General Taylor was ordered to Tampico with his little army, to co-operate with General Scott in his intended attack on Vera Cruz; and we had marched to Victoria, the capital of Ta-



maulipas, two hundred and sixty miles from Monterey, when our old commander was ordered to give up his little army to General Scott, with the exception of Bragg's and Washington's batteries, Colonel May's squadron of dragoons, and any regiment he might select. Our regiment was the favored one, and our little remnant of an army retraced its footsteps and returned to Monterey. General Wool had been left in command of the Northern Department, and with some regiments of Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, and Arkansas volunteers, was encamped near where the battle of Buena Vista was afterward fought. In passing, I will state that these untried volunteers, together with the meagre force that returned from Victoria with General Taylor, composed the little army that defeated Santa Anna with his 20,000 veteran troops on February 23, 1847. Our little command united with the main force under General Wool, and General Taylor assumed command of the whole army. We encamped in the beautiful valley of Agua Nueva, twelve miles west of the ranch of Buena Vista and eighteen miles from Saltillo. Here we whiled away the time in drill and camp duty. Our encampment was as usual near headquarters, and almost any time of day we could stand in our own tent doors and see the old General

sitting under the fly of a tent, conversing with some of his officers ; among them we oftentimes noticed Mr. Davis. The whole of the army, by this time becoming acquainted with the fact of the former estrangement between the two, now noticed the cordial intimacy that seemed to exist between them.

“It was a beautiful bright day, February 21, 1847, when, just about twelve o'clock, Captain Ben McCulloch (who commanded a small company of scouts) came through our encampment on a horse that showed signs of a hard and long travel. Captain McCulloch made his way direct to headquarters, alighted from his horse, and in great haste entered the General's tent. It was not a minute before orderlies and couriers were sent out, and the principal officers assembled—Santa Anna, with an army of 24,000 men, was in less than a day's march of our encampment. Captain McCulloch had heard orders read to the different Mexican regiments that morning at sunrise. Santa Anna stated in said orders “that his army had consumed the last ration he had, and that they must make their suppers from American commissaries.” This was the news that Captain McCulloch had brought. The regimental drums soon beat the signal for striking tents, which was quickly obeyed, and we took up the line of march

toward sunrise; not, however, before the enemy's advance guard came in sight. We made a rapid march to Buena Vista, twelve miles, which it appears had been selected as a battle-ground before. The battle-field is half a mile from the little hacienda for which it was named. Here the army encamped, except our regiment, which marched on six miles further to Saltillo, and encamped near General Taylor's marques. However, two companies of our regiment were detailed as pickets, and bivouacked on the ground where the battle was to be fought. General Taylor and his engineers had preceded us. Among the latter we noticed Lieutenant Pope, who was conspicuous in the late war on the Union side. Among the officers whom we saw riding over the field were General Wool, Colonel Davis, Colonel Henry Clay, and Major Bliss, who was Assistant Adjutant-General of the army, and others. They were engaged in noting the topography of the field until dark and after. It was after our forces were disposed and the line of defence defined, before General Taylor and Mr. Davis left for their headquarters. My position as a wide-awake picket gave me an opportunity to know these facts.

Early on the following morning (22d) our regiment returned to the main army, which

had slept on their arms. As the sun rose we could see groups of Mexican horsemen, who were no doubt sent out to reconnoitre our position, and gradually their main army came in sight. They moved cautiously and slowly, placing their cumbersome artillery in position, which was ill-proportioned to the poor little mules that had to draw it. At intervals during the day they would try the range of their heaviest guns on us, and we were reminded that their artillerists were equal to ours in skill. As the darkness closed in, the enemy's line approached nearer, and indicated an attempt to turn our left flank. The two lines of pickets extended along between the two armies and far up the mountain side. The flashes of the muskets in the darkness looked no larger than bright fire sparks as they glowed for an instant and then disappeared. Our regiment returned to our camp at Saltillo, where General Taylor soon after arrived. Our experience thus far led us to put faith in the old peculiarity attributed to a Spanish race, "that their armies never make an attack or an important movement under cover of darkness." We had our breakfast before the bloody day (23d) broke. It was a solemn feast, as we looked each other in the face in the glare of the camp-fires and wondered who would return to partake of supper. Only two

of our party of six returned when the battle was over (the writer and another), four of our number, as brave, gallant boys as ever marched forth, we left lying on the battle-field, dead.

On the morning of the 23d, we made double-quick to the battle-field, six miles, closely following General Taylor, who arrived on the field but a few minutes before us. The two armies were already engaged; the bright sun was just rising, and the solid acres and acres of Mexican soldiers, with their brightly burnished guns and gay equipage, was a gallant sight to behold. The whole scene in our front had the appearance of a forest of icicles reflecting the rays of a bright summer's sun. The Second Indiana regiment, which formed an important portion of our line, had been forced by immense odds to fall back, which left Bragg's battery and two sections of Washington's battery without support. The artillery, however, was well manned. The pieces were time and again unlimbered and fired into the advancing mass of the enemy, then they would limber up and fall back again. They were nearly out of ammunition and wanted time for the ordnance wagon to arrive, and time to select an advantageous position for their pieces. The enemy, with banners flying and bands in full blast, were advancing.

They were many battle-lines deep, with that old veteran regiment, the Tampico guards, in their front and in front of our regiment's position. They made a temporary halt and ceased firing when they saw a fresh force in their front, and reformed. Their officers rode up and down their lines, attempting, no doubt, to keep up the enthusiasm that seemed to prevail throughout their ranks. Our regiment was already formed parallel to the enemy's front, with the few of the Indiana regiment who had been rallied, under their gallant Major Bowles, formed on our right. Soon the clear voice of our colonel rang out: "Forward!" He led the charge himself, and after we had approached their lines within about one hundred paces, both sides opened fire. The artillery on both sides was hushed and we advanced, firing. It was no impetuous, reckless charge, but every soldier seemed to realize that the fate of our army was to be decided here. The wind came over the mountains from the south and swept away the smoke as rapidly as it came from the muzzle of the rifle and musket, and as there was no growth of any kind on the field except a few scattering and stunted Spanish daggers or yucca plants, the view was unintercepted. We could see every Mexican on the field who was on top of the ground. I do not think

that the high and wild shooting so common in battle was practised here. Every man took deliberate aim and expected his shot to count. We advanced firing to within twenty paces of their front, and beyond the position they occupied when we charged them. The front ranks, though urged on by those in their rear, continued to fall back, but with their faces toward us. When we got into close quarters our adversaries did not take time to raise their guns to the face, but fired from the hip. Regardless of the fact that our rifles had no bayonets, we privates had concluded that we were to throw ourselves into their ranks and were preparing to do so, when our colonel, more by gesture than words, for he could not be heard, ordered the regiment to withdraw, which we obeyed, leaving our killed and wounded on the field. The latter were massacred as soon as the enemy came in possession of that part of the field. But while we were playing sad havoc among those in our front the two wings extended far to our right and left, and we found ourselves almost surrounded. A few volleys scattered the forces that obstructed us, though very soon their whole army shouted when we commenced to retreat. Our regiment only moved back about two hundred yards, when we were quickly formed in rear of Bragg's and Wash-

ington's batteries, which, having received ammunition and obtained good positions, were ranged in a line with guns loaded and port fires burning, only waiting for us to get from between them and the enemy. The Mexican army was jubilant, and again struck up the music; but six heavy pieces of artillery loaded with grape and canister, and in some cases with musket balls, fired at intervals of about two seconds, checked their ardor, and confusion became a panic. There was no way for them to get out of range of our guns in any direction without running nearly a mile. The guns were served as rapidly as could be done by veteran and well-drilled artillerists, and every shot added terror to the fugitives. The main body reached a depression near the foot of the mountain, which enabled them to get nearly out of sight by lying very close to the ground. Then it was that shells were used instead of round shot, until even that place of temporary safety became too hot for them. Our colonel was severely wounded in the first charge, a musket-ball entering his right foot on the side and just below the instep, carrying into the flesh a portion of his spur, which made it doubly painful. He sat on his horse, however, and still commanded his regiment, witnessing the discomfiture of the enemy with evident satisfaction. A large



body of the enemy's cavalry had been massed in front and to the left of our position (I mean in front of our regiment and the small detachment of Indiana troops). The other portions of our lines were hotly engaged with the enemy's infantry, and we could look for no aid from any quarter, so we had to meet the charge of the regiments of Mexican lancers, which quickly followed. Here Colonel Davis formed the celebrated V, which in reality was no V, but a re-entering angle. The formation was ordered by Colonel Davis without the counsel or co-operation of any officer, for indeed there were none to advise with. The small portion of the Indiana regiment was formed along the edge of a ravine which extended north and south. Our regiment was formed at right angles with the line mentioned, so that we faced the approaching cavalry. They came like an avalanche. Our regiment was thoroughly drilled, and it took little time for the colonel to dispose us to receive the enemy. We were deployed as skirmishers at very short intervals, the front rank to fire, the rear rank to reserve fire, then step forward and fire while the other rank was reloading. Colonel Davis, bleeding as he was, gave these directions and enjoined us to fire according to orders, and not "empty all the guns at once." The gaily caparazoned lancers were approach-

ing rapidly, each with a lance the blade of which shone brightly, while the tri-colored streamer on each lance gave the proud horsemen a magnificent appearance, "almost too pretty to shoot at," was the remark of one of our boys. They came in fours, and when near enough we observed that they were led by a very large and stout officer (colonel we supposed), who had his sword raised, and while very brave, manifested a very poor judgment on this occasion. By the bye, he must have been one of our countrymen some time or other, on land or sea, for we afterward found, on close inspection, that his wrists were tattooed with the star spangled banner and several of our national mottoes. If he had at any time been an Americano, he received on this occasion, from his former fellow-citizens, as a present, at least a dozen rifle-balls more than he could pack away. But to resume the story: The officer alluded to bravely led the charge. To his right and a little behind him was a boy-bugler, who we afterward had opportunity to closely inspect, and found that he and his bugle, even, had shared his colonel's fate. The ground over which they had to make their approach was apparently unbroken, but they encountered several ravines too wide for a horseman, and their long columns were what one would imagine a huge serpent moving

over the ground in a tortuous course. They evidently did not understand the manœuvre of our little force ; it was something new in military strategy, and they no doubt expected to encounter an old-fashioned infantry hollow square. But when they got near and discovered their mistake they seemed determined to make the most of it ; and with their superior force (more than ten to one) overwhelm and massacre us. They were making for the line of our regiment, which threw their lines parallel to the lines of our allies formed on the bank of the ravine. They were now in short range, and with levelled guns we awaited patiently the order to fire ; but it never came. The head of their column had passed the point of the extreme right of the Indiana detachment, which brought them inconveniently near the line ; the little bugler had raised his bugle to give the signal to "deploy and charge," and had given one distinct blast, when the report of a solitary gun broke the stillness and was followed by a prolonged volley all along our line. I think I am safe in saying not a loaded gun was left in the whole command ; but that one round did fearful execution. For the distance of nearly two hundred yards the riders lay thick, while their unharmed horses wheeled to the right and left as if acting under orders, and mixed with

the already demoralized lancers. We had no leisure to reload before we were ordered to fall back. Twelve or fifteen paces placed us again in the rear of Bragg's and Washington's batteries, the pieces already loaded and pointed. They were not slow to belch forth showers of grape and canister, and every effort of the Mexican officers to rally their men and renew the charge was fruitless. The carnage was so terrible that many of them dismounted, took the nearest route to get out of range of the artillery, and then, in a roundabout way, came and surrendered. The survivors fled from the field in confusion, followed by iron hail as long as they were in range.

At the same time that we were engaged in repulsing this charge, the line on our right was warmly engaged with the enemy's infantry, and we learned at the same hour a detachment of Urea's cavalry made a raid on our camp at Saltillo, and were repulsed by the two companies left to guard it. They did considerable execution with their guns, and hoisted a disabled cannon on a common road wagon, manned it with teamsters, and contributed greatly to the victory gained. Just about the same hour, too, another detachment of lancers had charged the ranch of Buena Vista, which, as before stated, was half a mile from the battle-ground. The ord-

nance and commissary wagons were posted here in a circle, one wagon-tongue under the bed of the next, which was a splendid defence against cavalry. There was only one opening to this park, which was wide enough for the caissons to be brought in at a swooping gait and replenished with ammunition before returning. All the fugitives from our whole army were at this park. There were some from almost every regiment, the majority of whom kept their guns in their flight from the field. When the Mexican cavalry appeared many of them took refuge in the covered wagons. Contrary to all expectations, the lancers filed through the opening, and many were the wagon covers that they probed with their lance blades in search of "Americanos." Some man, bolder than the others, shot a lancer from his horse, and a battle on a small scale commenced, terminating in the complete rout of the enemy by the party, who came forth from their hiding places and fought like men when they found they were forced to go.

But to return to the battle-field; the enemy had made a simultaneous attack at all points, and had been repulsed everywhere. The firing had almost ceased, except that the artillery exchanged compliments at intervals. The evening had far advanced, and we began

to hope that both sides had had enough for one day, and that the battle would not be resumed until the following morning; but not so. A large body of infantry was massed in our front, and it was thought they would attack us all along our line. Very soon the largest portion of their force was thrown against our centre, which was defended by the Kentucky, Illinois, and Third Indiana regiments of infantry. It is said that this charge was led by Santa Anna in person. It was a fearful battle. The writer does not remember that he ever heard a more incessant roar of musketry during any of the great battles he participated in during the late war than was heard here. Victory seemed to tremble in the balance, and occasionally one side or the other would bring down their guns to a charge. They fought in this manner only a few paces apart for several minutes. Our regiment was ordered to reinforce the contested point, and we formed on their flank within one hundred yards of their right.\* They were already wavering, and had fallen back forty or fifty paces. One volley from

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\*Here it was necessary for Colonel Davis to cross a deep ravine. His wounded foot was thrown over the pommel of his saddle. He spurred on his staunch bay horse, Richard, and he cleared it with a bound; and as they went flying over, Colonel Davis said he saw a horse and cart beneath him in the ravine, which enabled him to guess at the width of the leap.

our rifles was sufficient to rout them, and they fled in confusion, leaving many of their officers and men on the field. After they had retreated out of range of our guns, the firing ceased, and just before the sun set. The sweetest music was wafted to us from the routed forces; sweeter still when we were informed, by one of May's old veteran dragoons, that it was a signal for all to "rally on the reserve." At dusk we returned to Saltillo, closely following after the hero of the day. We found everything in confusion there; the Mexican cavalry had charged through our camp, riding in and through our tents, and scattering our cooking utensils in every direction. About fifteen of their dead were lying in different portions of our regimental encampment, and several wounded on the outskirts of the camp. Sad was the meal that followed. Nearly every man had lost a mess-mate or friend. Even fifty of our regiment of 280 who went into battle that morning were killed, and forty seven wounded. We slept, and early in the morning, after a hasty meal eaten by the light of our camp-fires, we took up the line of march for the field, expecting to renew the battle. Colonel Davis having been carried from the field just after we repulsed the Mexican cavalry the day before, our major (Bradford) took command. Gen-

eral Taylor had preceded us, and we arrived in sight of the scene of carnage again just at sunrise. We met the old general returning to Saltillo. He drew up near the head of our column, raised his hat, and in a tone loud enough for us all to hear, said, "Boys, they are gone." It was a hearty yell that responded to that announcement.

Jefferson Davis twice saved the day during the great battle which conquered one-half of Mexico, and made General Taylor President of these United States.

Mr. Davis at the time he figured so conspicuously in the Mexican war was in the prime of life. He carried with him into the camp and on the battle-field that native dignity which has characterized him in all his successes and adversities. In the dark prison, or as the chosen chief of millions of the proudest, noblest, and truest people of any nation of the earth, he never forgot those noble attributes with which kind heaven had endowed him. He was a strict disciplinarian, and never relaxed the rigid military regulations in the least, not even when our term of service had nearly expired. He was nevertheless approachable to the lowest private in the army, and gave an attentive ear to all their grievances. He was jealous of the interests of his men, and there was nothing obtained by the



most favored command in the army that he did not demand and obtain for us. The field officers of our regiment were all prominent Mississippians. Lieutenant-Colonel A. K. McClung was the celebrated duellist; he is well known to history. When he committed suicide at Jackson, Miss., several years after the war, he completed the list of eight lives that he had taken. He was brave to recklessness, and a confirmed hypochondriac. He received a serious wound while our regiment was storming Fort Tenerio, at Monterey. General A. B. Bradford, of Holly Springs, Miss., was our major. He was the oldest man in our regiment, a gentleman of the "old school," and brave as a lion. He was second in command of the regiment when it made the desperate charge at Buena Vista, as already related. He failed to notice the order given by the colonel to retire, and when he saw his command retreating he called out in the most excited manner: "Kill me, kill me! The Mississippi regiment is running!" The soldier and statesman who inspires the theme of this sketch still survives and still boasts of being a Mississippian.

The term of service for which the First Mississippi Rifles enlisted having nearly expired their Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel having been seriously wounded, and only a

remnant of the regiment remaining,\* as soon as the proper arrangements could be completed Colonel Davis, on May 29, 1847, with the First Mississippi Rifles, left the Brazos on the same ship with the Second Kentucky Infantry, for New Orleans, which port they reached June 9th. They bore with them the remains of Colonel McKee, and Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Clay, one of Colonel Davis's friends at West Point.

The New Orleans *Picayune* of June 9th said: "It is in no invidious spirit that the Mississippi Volunteers are selected for a public demonstration, as they are neighbors and friends, and, as it were, a part of us. The Mississippians bring here their Colonel and Lieutenant-Colonel, maimed and pierced with honorable wounds; but Davis and McClung yet live to cheer their hearts and received with them the reward of daring and brilliant actions. Colonel McKee and Lieutenant-Colonel Clay (Second Kentucky) came not at all."

In the *Picayune* of June 11th I find this notice of the ceremonies: "Yesterday was a day devoted by our citizens to the reward

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\* When the regiment went to the war its numbers aggregated, officers and men, 926. It brought back to New Orleans but 376, showing a loss in battle and from disease of 550 men, or over sixty per cent. of its original strength.

of patriotism and heroic deeds. It was a day appointed to receive men who had voluntarily left their homes to meet the public enemy, and had gallantly discharged the high duty they had assumed. To attempt to describe the enthusiasm evinced on this occasion was in vain." A committee of reception had arranged a royal welcome for them. The volunteers debarked amid an immense crowd, who shouted themselves hoarse, and "the regiments were formed on Canal Street, and escorted by the Legion and several other divisions of the military of the city, among whom we noticed the German Yagers and the Tigers; the whole, under the command of Major-General Lewis, moved toward Lafayette Square." A large assemblage of both sexes had gathered, and, amid the firing of cannon and the warm greetings of the people, the volunteers took their position around the stand of the orator.

The Hon. Sargeant S. Prentiss had been selected to deliver the address. Such an oration has not been pronounced since death has stilled his eloquent tongue, and the memory of the exploits that he glowingly described that day has remained with those he addressed, and fills them, forty-three years after the events he depicted, with admiration for the victors and for him who threw them "the

picture of the fight." Cut off in the prime of life and full splendor of his genius, he has left none to fill his place, but many to mourn him. One of his sons died of the hardships sustained in the war between the States; the other lives, beloved and respected by all who know him.

"At the close of Mr. Prentiss's speech Colonel Davis, who was loudly called for, rose to reply to the warm and eloquent address of Mr. Prentiss. Replying in behalf of his own regiment, and in some measure in behalf of all the volunteers, he eloquently answered for them. . . .

"The streets through which the procession moved were filled with spectators, and the balconies of the houses presented an array of fair admirers."

These threw down flowers as the regiment marched past, and sometimes gentle words of congratulatory welcome reached the ears of the regiment. One very pretty girl gratified Colonel Davis exceedingly by calling out, "There goes our lion-hearted Davis." He always said she was a Mississippian, but to his family and to him, when more widely known, it was a cause of deep thankfulness that love and esteem for him did not especially distinguish the women of any Southern State. One of the most com-

forting memories of his life seemed to be the confidence and affection bestowed upon him by the women of the South. Sometimes, when he read criticisms upon himself made by disapproving Confederates, without saying why, he would ejaculate, "God keep and bless the women of the South; *they* have never shot an arrow at me."

When the speeches were finished, the regiments marched from Lafayette Square down to the Place d'Armes, where they partook of a luncheon prepared for them. The Place d'Armes is in the centre of a hollow square, one side of which is bounded by the Mississippi River. It must have been a striking sight, this immense company of the people seated in front of the old cathedral and the Department of Justice, amid the shade of semi-tropical trees and surrounded by brilliant flowers that bloomed on the borders of the Square, the turbid "inland sea" flowing on the other side. All the balconies of the Pontalba building were crowded on either side with ladies in their summer garb, each one laden with wreaths and bunches of blossoms for the heroes of the hour.

The next day, a steam-boat having been chartered to convey the regiment home, they embarked and steamed up the river, stopping at each town on the Mississippi to leave those

who had homes there or adjacent to it. Of course the coming of the boat was heralded, and a glad crowd pressed on board to welcome the Rifles.

The last stopping-place was to be Vicksburg. At Natchez twelve young ladies, holding a garland many yards long, met the regiment at the Bluff, and crowned the officers with wreaths. Their banners were also wreathed with bowers. After some preliminary ceremonies there were speeches by the town's-people and officers of the regiment; then, a procession; after which Mr. Davis—who was on crutches—came out in a barouche, nearly hidden with flowers, to take me to the steam-boat. The journey was one long ovation.

At every stopping-place, until the regiment reached Vicksburg, there were salutes and addresses of welcome, to which Colonel Davis and Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander McClung—as at New Orleans—answered on the part of the regiment. Looking at the keen-eyed, quiet young men who practised “go as you please,” and “standing at ease,” in their citizens' clothes, discolored by exposure to the weather, with their air of being half-ashamed of so much “flummery,” as a member of the regiment said, one could scarcely imagine that they had performed

such prodigies of valor, and been such great factors in compelling peace; for then, though its approach had not been proclaimed, the Mexicans had practically received their fatal blow.

The men enlisted for six months during the Mexican War were there too short a time for effective discipline. A cousin of mine went out with the "six months' men" who were first enlisted, but unfortunately no regular discipline had been enforced, and they dropped out, one or two at a time, and came home. When he reached Natchez someone asked why he came home, and he answered that as the Captain and First Lieutenant had been mobbed and beaten by the men, he thought that it would be his turn next, so he left the "file" (one man) he was drilling and came home.

After one day in Vicksburg we returned home. Mr. Davis suffered intensely from his wound, as indeed he did for five years, and was unable to dispense with two crutches for two years. The bone exfoliated, and pieces that had been shattered worked out or were extracted by a surgeon, causing dreadful nervous disturbance, not to speak of the physical anguish. Even after the foot was apparently well, for eight or ten years the slightest misstep gave him pain.

Immediately upon his return to his home the appointment of Brigadier-General of Volunteers was tendered to him by the President, in compliment to his valor and efficiency.

He declined the offer, on the ground that the Constitution provided for such appointments by the States, and not by the Federal Government. The following is his letter to the Adjutant-General:

“WARREN COUNTY, MISS., June 20, 1847.

“GENERAL R. JONES.

“SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of May 18th last, accompanying a commission of Brigadier-General filled in my favor.

“Through you I convey the information that I respectfully decline the appointment with the offer of which I was honored.

“Very respectfully,

“Your most obedient servant,

“JEFFERSON DAVIS.”



## CHAPTER XXVII.

IN THE THIRTIETH CONGRESS, 1847-48.

MR. DAVIS had not long to wait for the most signal expressions of gratitude and homage which his State could offer him. Governor A. G. Brown, within less than two months after his return home, appointed him to fill the vacancy in the United States Senate occasioned by the death of Senator Jesse Speight. His appointment was unanimously ratified by the Legislature. Through all avenues of public opinion, in popular meetings, and by the press, the people of the State enthusiastically endorsed the Governor's choice. Thus early Mississippi put on record her trust in Mr. Davis. It was a trust which was to abide in him so long as he lived, and to be accorded most generously whenever he most needed it.

Pale and emaciated from the nervous pain consequent upon his wound, and supported by two crutches, Mr. Davis took his seat at the first session of the Thirtieth Congress.

Perhaps no legislative body was ever more suspiciously regardful of its own dignity or

more coldly punctilious in its discipline of new and untried members than the Senate of the United States fifty years ago. Yet its welcome to the young Senator from Mississippi was most cordial and unreserved. This was not strange. The gossip which flies constantly between the two halls of Congress had whispered of his brilliant career in the House while a member of the Twenty-ninth Congress. And something more than congressional gossip—the voice of an admiring people—had reached grave Senators; that “across the border” American valor had once more been made memorable, and that their new associate had been its inspirer.

The session opened on December 6, 1847. Mr. Sevier, of Arkansas, presented the credentials of Mr. Davis. Two other men were admitted into the senatorial arena. One of these was John P. Hale, of New Hampshire, the other was Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois, a Democrat of the Western type, who seemed destined to rule the party and reach the highest status, but whose career was finally wrecked upon the rock of “squatter sovereignty.”

Mr. Davis was appointed on several important committees, which showed the confidence in him inspired by his military service. These were the Committees on Military

Affairs and on Pensions. He was also one of the Regents of the Smithsonian Institute, and took a conspicuous and influential part in the organization of it. He was a member of the Library Committee, and advocated with great earnestness Mons. Vattermare's international exchange of the literature of the world.\* Early in January a debate

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\* Mons. Alexander Vattermare was the original Herr Alexandre who, from 1826 to 1830 astonished the Old World by his feats of magic or juggling. He conceived the idea in early youth of establishing an universal literary exchange between the authors of the world through their respective governments. The medals, the engravings, and paintings of every country were to be part of the scheme—everything made by man was to be exchanged, so as to disseminate science and the arts by practical knowledge of their achievements. He was a numismatist, a connoisseur of engravings, of paintings, and a very clever artist in black and white. His skill in juggling was without parallel.

He was said to have learned this last art in order to gain admission to the presence of the princes and potentates of the earth who could assist him in his scheme. He said, as America was a free country, dominated by the union of all races, he would juggle no more but try his scheme on its merits. He brought a wonderful collection of autographs and sketches, from crowned heads, authors, statesmen, and inventors; also a magnificent series of medals, which he presented to the United States, and which were unfortunately burned when the Congressional Library was lost by fire.

Mr. Davis was invited by ex-President J. Q. Adams, who had known Vattermare when he was abroad, to meet him at dinner. After dinner Mr. Adams asked him to perform a little feat to show his magic powers. Vattermare declined, while Mr. Adams brushed a fly out of his ear. The fly became more troublesome and would not be driven away. At last Mr. Adams bowed his thanks for the magician's compliance. He had sent the fly. In 1849 he did not look over thirty-five, yet he was past maturity in 1830, when he paid Sir Walter Scott a visit and accompanied him and Miss Edgeworth

arose which gave proof of Mr. Davis's intelligent grasp of all questions connected with Mexico and the war that was still waging. Cass, of Michigan, had reported from the Military Committee what was called at the time the "Ten Regiment Bill;" a bill inspired by the War Department. It provided for raising ten additional regiments of infantry to serve during the war. Mexico was defeated, but not yet humbled. Its armies had been dispersed; but there was nothing to prevent them, under a change of government, from reorganizing again at other and less accessible points. Its Government was a fugitive; but not a word looking to amity had come from it. The American forces on its territory were not sufficient to retain the advantages already secured, or to extend operations if such a course should become necessary. Here was a wholly unexpected termination to a war which, from the first battle, had seemed to indicate an early and easy triumph. Cass's bill was designed to cover this defect. It met with sharp opposi-

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on their tour of the Scottish lakes. During this visit Vattermare obtained, as he and Sir Walter stood waiting for the stage to pass on which Mr. Vattermare was to leave Abbotsford, a piece of poetry, written on the gate-post by the poet, in which Sir Walter spoke in the character of sheriff of the county reading the riot act to all the characters the wizard had personated before him. Fac-similes of the album were published and are now much valued in Paris.

tion from several Southern Senators, among whom Calhoun was the most prominent. He had vigorously opposed the war when the declaration of it had been made. He now deprecated the conquest of Mexico, which, he argued, would be the disastrous result of any attempt to strengthen the army of occupation. Crittenden objected on another ground. He thought that the additional force asked for should be composed of volunteers rather than of regulars. As the spectre of a conquered country and a suspended autonomy haunted Calhoun, so did the bugbear of a military Frankenstein appal Crittenden.

In answer to the fear of ultimate absorption, entertained by Calhoun and those who, with him, foresaw the "dismemberment of another Poland," Mr. Davis stated that he could accept Calhoun's resolutions, "and still vote for the bill." "But," he asked, "is Mexico conquered? Is any part of it conquered? Conquest, as laid down by some writers, is of three kinds. Ruin is one of these kinds of conquest; but we have not ruined Mexico, and God forbid we ever should. The moral feeling of this country would never justify such a course. Another mode of conquest is to hold a country by controlling its Government. That is not suited to the genius of

our country. We send no proconsul abroad—no provincial army to direct the Government of the country. We recognize as the great basis of all institutions self-government. The other mode of conquest is by colonizing a country. We cannot do that. In neither of these modes, then, have we ever conquered Mexico.”

Referring to Crittenden’s dread of the regular soldier, Mr. Davis skilfully drew the distinction between him and the volunteer.

“If this country were invaded I would turn to the great body of the militia—for I use the terms ‘volunteer’ and ‘militia’ as synonymous—for its defence. But when we carry on a foreign war, and especially when defensive operations merely are carried on, we have reached a point where regulars are the force which should be employed in the nice routine of the service in which the duties are not sufficiently important to justify that disruption of society . . . which would result from bringing out men of that high class which the honorable Senator from Kentucky has correctly said constitute the great body of the volunteers.”

Following his argument, Mr. Davis touched upon a question which, later, was to receive, on both sides of the great sectional line, a bloody solution.

“The gentleman inquires,” he said, “why it is that we prefer regulars? I will answer: We prefer regulars, first, because they are cheaper; secondly, because they can be maintained in better discipline. They will maintain a better state of police. They will be healthier, and therefore more effective, in proportion to their numbers, for mere garrison duties. As long as you keep the high-bred gentlemen for the battle, they will bear any privation, submit to every restraint, and discharge to the utmost every duty. But do you expect that those men, who have broken all the endearing ties of home in order to fight their country’s battles, will sacrifice themselves to the mere duties of the sentinel?”

Mr. Webster, in opposing the bill, had called the war “odious.” This epithet was indignantly questioned by Mr. Davis.

“Odious for what?” he asked. “On account of the skill and gallantry with which it has been conducted? Or is it because of the humanity, the morality, the magnanimous clemency which have marked its execution? . . . Where is the odium? What portion of our population is infected with it? From what cause does it arise? . . . Where, sir, are the evidences of evil brought upon us by this ‘odious’ war? Where can you point

to any inroad upon our prosperity, public or private, industrial, commercial, or financial, which can be, in any degree, attributed to the prosecution of this war? All that is yet to be shown, and I confidently await the issue."

In a discussion with John Bell, of Tennessee, Mr. Davis defined his idea of a military occupation. He declared himself only in favor of such an occupation as would "prevent the general Government of Mexico, against which the war had been directed, from re-establishing its power and again concentrating the scattered fragments of its army to renew active hostilities against us."

In the course of the debate on this bill, which had drawn in a majority of the Senate, the fitness of Mr. Davis for the chairmanship of the Committee on Military Affairs was made clear. His election to the position, during the session of the Thirty-first Congress, was nearly unanimous — thirty - two votes having been given for him, to five for all others.

The proposed increase of the army, however, was never made on the lines of the Cass bill. Before Congress could perfect the necessary legislation events had moved toward pacification. The flitting Government had become rooted long enough at Queretaro to



propose and consider terms of peace. On July 6th President Polk laid before Congress copies of a treaty of peace between the United States and the Mexican republic, the ratifications of which had been exchanged at that city on the 30th of May previous.

On April 14th a bill to provide for the repair and improvement of the dam at the head of Cumberland Island brought up, incidentally, the policy of internal improvements. Calhoun spoke in favor of the bill. Although holding to the doctrine of strict construction, he had not the slightest doubt of the right and duty of the Government to repair the dam. He regarded it as "the channel of one of the great navigable rivers, which belongs to no particular State, but which serves as a highway in which many States are interested."

"The States," he argued, were prohibited from entering into such a work. If the Government could not do it, it was plain that neither Kentucky nor Indiana could make the improvement. He held that it was "as clearly the right of the general Government to repair the dam, under the provision in the Constitution which gives the power to regulate commerce among the States, as it is to repair light-houses or to replace buoys that have been destroyed."

At the outset Mr. Davis spoke in general terms. He took care to put on record his opinion that "the whole system of internal improvement by the Federal Government was an assumption of power not conferred by the Constitution." In the specific case, however, he approved of the appropriation on the sole ground that it was to repair a dam which the Federal Government had constructed in the Ohio River."

This seemed to bring him side by side with Calhoun. But here he took issue with the great champion of State sovereignty. "If I were compelled," he asserted, "to rely on the power 'to regulate commerce' as a justification for this appropriation, my adherence to the doctrine of literal interpretation of the terms of the Constitution would compel me to vote against this bill, intimately connected as it is with the interests of the great valley of which I represent a part. To regulate is to make rules, not to provide means. . . . The power to prescribe the rules for commerce among the States was surrendered to the General Government; the States were thenceforward deprived of the power to impose restrictions or levy duties upon the commerce of each other."

He could not agree with the theory that the practice of erecting light-houses and buoys in

the harbors on the sea-coast was an argument for the existence of the power to improve the channels of interior commerce. "With great deference," he said, "to the acknowledged ability of the Senator, I differ entirely from his conclusion, and deny the analogy upon which he insists. The erection of light-houses upon our maritime coast, and the placing of buoys to mark the entrance into our harbors, are mainly referable to the power to maintain a navy and provide for the common defence; though I will admit that the construction of light-houses and buoys may also be drawn from the power to regulate commerce, and for like reasons as apply to the construction of docks, ways, and warehouses."

This admission, or rather the form of it, did not quite satisfy Calhoun. He considered it as "untenable and dangerous, as it would enable Congress to give any extension it pleased to the power."

Mr. Davis hastened to define his position. He believed that it was originally the practice to limit appropriation for a harbor to the amount of port and tonnage duties collected at it. "I wish the rule," he exclaimed, "was now in force. No admission has been made by me which can be fairly construed as recognizing the right to expend means drawn from the national treasury upon harbors which

have no taxable commerce, and which, therefore, supply no funds to the Government. Last of all, can anything advanced by me be tortured into an admission of the right to go abroad from the place for which the regulation is made, to create commerce upon which the regulation shall operate?"

This debate had been peculiar. It had, in a minor way, covered much ground. It had opened with an uncompromising blast from Bagly, of Alabama, against the entire system of internal improvements by the general Government, "whenever and wherever it is intended to be applied." After this, curiously enough—with one single exception—the discussion was participated in by men of the same mind. That exception was Crittenden, of Kentucky, who had insisted on the old Whig idea of centralized power. He was in favor of the largest latitude to be given to Government aid for improvements of this class. On the other hand, the difference between Calhoun and Davis was technical, not radical. Upon the broad question they were in accord. Upon the specific cause only they had separated. At the final vote the bill was passed by an overwhelming majority—31 to 8. In that small minority strange comrades were found. With Bagly, strict constructionist, went Hale, unrelenting sectionalist.

It may be added, here, that in his subsequent career in the Senate Mr. Davis never departed from the line of policy indicated in the Cumberland debate. For him, in one sense, the Constitution was always like the Bible. Deductions from its provisions, or arguments on them, if based only on partial examination thereof, might be modified. But if both in spirit and letter it had, after conscientious study, once become thoroughly grasped, neither arguments nor deductions could admit of change. In the discussion of all constitutional questions Mr. Davis's faith in the federative compact was absolute. He always regarded it—as he always spoke of it—as “the supreme law of the land.”

On April 20, 1848, a firebrand was hurled into the Senate. This came from the hand of Hale, of New Hampshire, in the shape of a bill introduced by him, “relating to riots and unlawful assemblies in the District of Columbia.”

The bill was clearly disingenuous. Its avowed motive had been an assemblage of several armed citizens of the District, and an attack by them upon the building occupied by the *National Era*, an organ of the abolition party, published in Washington. It said nothing as to the exciting causes which had led to the gathering it was framed to punish.

It wholly ignored a bold attempt which had stirred the Capitol only a few days before—the kidnapping in the schooner *Pearl*, by a band of non-residents stealing into the city, of seventy odd negroes, belonging, under the guarantees of the Constitution, to citizens of the District. It spoke as loud as a trumpet upon the protection to be given to one kind of property—that in a newspaper—but was as dumb as a mute upon that to be accorded to another kind of property—that in slaves. Hale could not but be aware that the mere reading of such a bill would be met with a storm of indignant protest. He had not long to wait for the outburst. A rattling fusillade was at once poured into the bill. Calhoun himself gave the word of command. He charged that its introduction was “a masked attack upon the great institution of the South, upon which not only its prosperity but its very existence depends.” He had hoped that younger members who had come into the body, who represented portions of the country at least as much interested as that from which he came, might have taken the lead in the defence of that institution. In this there was a certain note of pathos. It looked as though the veteran sentinel had grown weary of his lonely watch-tower.

Mr. Davis was the first to respond. He

made it clear that his entrance, under the circumstances, into the debate was due to this, and to this only. "I have only to say," he exclaimed, "that it is from no want of accordance in feeling with the honorable Senator, but from deference to him who has so long and so nobly stood foremost in defence of the institutions of the South, that I remained silent. It was rather that I wish to follow him, than that I did not feel the indignation which he has so well expressed."

Mr. Davis followed this personal tribute to the great leader with an unequivocal declaration of his own position.

"The time has come," he exclaimed, "when Congress should interpose the legislation necessary for the punishment of those men who come within our jurisdiction, acting, in fact and in morals, as incendiaries; coming here within the legislative limits of Congress to steal a portion of that property which is recognized as such by the Constitution of the United States, and therefore entitled to our protection. Is this District to be made the field of Abolition struggles? Is this chamber to be the hot-bed in which plants of sedition are to be nursed? Why is it that in this body, once looked to as the conservative branch of the Government, once looked to as so dignified that it stood above the power of

faction, we find the subject of this contest, so insulting to the South, so irritating always when it is agitated, introduced on such an occasion? Is this," he asked, "debatable ground?" "No!" was his own emphatic answer. It revealed his certainty of conviction that the Constitution had made the ground undebatable. It showed, moreover, his prevision as to the ultimate consequences of such legislation. "It is ground," he declared, "upon which the people of this Union may shed blood; and that is the final result. If it be pressed any further, and if this Senate is to be made the theatre of that contest, let it come—the sooner the better. We who represent the Southern States are not here to be insulted on account of institutions which we inherit. And if civil discord is to be thrown from this chamber upon the land; if the fire is to be kindled herewith which is to burn the temple of our Union; if this is to be made the centre from which civil war is to radiate, here let the conflict begin. I am ready, for one, to meet any incendiary who, dead to every feeling of patriotism, attempts to introduce it."

These were strong words from one who, like Mr. Davis, was always more inclined to discountenance than to urge disunion as a remedy for the dissensions within the Union.



But there was a reason for his warmth. The occasion was sinister in the extreme. Recent events in the city had thrown a wave of anxiety as far as the doors of the Senate chamber. Southern Senators had heard those events hotly canvassed in hotels and on the streets. They had taken their seats that morning vaguely troubled. A storm was raging outside; above all things it ought, for the peace of the country, to be kept from the Senate. Then came Hale's bill. Submitted and read early in the day, it more than startled them; it alarmed them. The debate which followed was most exciting and much too personal. Among those from the South, besides Calhoun and Mr. Davis, who participated, were Butler, of South Carolina; Foote, of Mississippi; Mangum, of North Carolina; and Westcott, of Florida. Douglas, of Illinois, sided, rather cynically, with Hale. Cameron, of Pennsylvania, could not see what had induced the Senator from New Hampshire to introduce such a measure at that moment; Hannegan, of Indiana, denounced it, and Davis, of Massachusetts, supported it. The excitement was extraordinary—the more so that it was evidenced that all the speakers, save one, sincerely regretted it. A living coal seemed to have leaped upon the floor from the fires of the Missouri Compromise,

even then building. Hale throughout the discussion was cool, because it was a mere matter of calculation with him. It had mattered little to him what would be the fate of his bill. What he had most desired was, by means of it, to drag to the surface the question of slavery in the District of Columbia. In this object he succeeded. Through one long day of bitter words the Senate discussed the subject. At the next meeting it took action, and refused to consider the bill.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### THE OREGON QUESTION.

IN the Thirtieth Congress the most important issue was the question of admitting the Territory of Oregon into the Union. Mr. Davis took a conspicuous part in the debates.

On June 23d he offered, as an amendment to the twelfth section of the pending bill to admit Oregon, a resolution declaring that "nothing contained in this act shall be so construed as to authorize the prohibition of domestic slavery in said Territory while it remains in the condition of a Territory in said United States."

He regarded the pending bill as unconstitutional, and the twelfth section of it as an unwarranted attempt to exercise by indirection a power not delegated to the Federal Government, and subversive of the equal rights of the States. He denied that there was any intention to force slavery on Oregon, as was charged by the opponents of the proposed amendment, asserting that the South only desired to show the ground on which she had

stood from the commencement of the Confederation, and arguing, further, that she should be let alone. He made a great speech in support of the amendment on July 12th.

He said: "As to the introduction of slavery into Oregon, no Southern Senator had ever asked it. The fact that the slave is property which his owner may carry away with him into any part of the Union was that which they were desirous to see recognized. The clause in the Constitution relative to the regulation of commerce was a constitutional admission that the slave is property. It is because slaves are considered property that the importation of slaves from Africa has been carried on under the sanction of this clause in the Constitution. The words 'slave or any other property,' in the Constitution, are conclusive on this point. If the existence of the slave as property be admitted, what power has Congress to interfere with it? He denied that there was any such power in Congress. Congress had no power to change the condition or to strip the master of his right in his property. Entering a Territory with this property, the citizen has a right to its protection.

"On the acquisition of a Territory the condition of slavery was not changed. The Gov-

ernment acquired no new power over it, but stood merely in the position of an agent for its protection.

“As to the inviolability of the law which prevailed in a Territory when acquired, he admitted that until abrogated the existing law or municipal regulation must remain in force within the Territory itself. He denied that there was any power in Congress, or in the people of the Territory, to interrupt the slave system. He regarded the course pursued by the Northern States in relation to fugitive slaves as an outrage on justice and in violation of that principle of the equality of the States which is guaranteed by the Constitution. The owner of a slave when he entered some of these States, if he took his slave with him, was either exposed to the mortification of seeing his slave seduced from his side or seized and carried away by violence. If the opponents of slavery wished to emancipate the slaves, they were taking the wrong course. Slavery could not be abolished without a series of preliminary preparations; and during these preparations great dangers would menace the people of the South. The most judicious course was to let the institution alone, and permit it to spread itself through the adjacent States, so that it might assume a new and more liberal character.

The practical and useful emancipation of the slave will not be the labor of one generation. The slave must be made fit for his freedom by education and discipline, and thus made unfit for slavery. As soon as he becomes unfit for slavery the master will no longer desire to hold him as a slave.

“What remedy has been proposed by the opponents of slavery? What good have they done? They have abducted slaves but emancipated none. Do they expect to persuade the South to give up slavery? It is probably for the political advantage of the section in which the agitation against slavery originates. The spirit of concession exhibited by the South had failed to produce a corresponding spirit in the North. The latter still continue to assail the South as influenced only by a desire to increase the slave power and obtain still greater political influence in the scale of States.”

He insisted that the disorder and agitation which prevailed in the Southern States was not of domestic origin, but came from New England and from Great Britain. He asserted it to be the duty of the United States to protect the property of a slave-owner during the transit from one State to another. The resolutions of the States which favored abolition were adopted entirely with a view to obtain-

ing additional political power, and imposed on the South the strongest obligation to rise in self-defence.

He referred to the fraternal feeling which induced the Southern States to make common cause with the North in the war of the Revolution. The South had no especial cause of complaint; it was flourishing by its trade with Great Britain. But it was actuated by fraternal feeling and principle to take up arms; and now was she to be asked to give up her domestic institutions? The South asked for no new guarantee; no new security; but she desired that the Constitution should be preserved from violation.

“Senators,” he said, “have treated this amendment as a proposition to force slavery into the Territory of Oregon. Sir, I had no such purpose, no such desire; and surely the most ingenious must fail to extract any such meaning from its letter. It is but a distinct avowal of the ground uniformly maintained by all statesmen of the strict construction school, and adhered to by Southern men generally, throughout the entire period of our confederate existence. Its direct aim is to restrain the Federal Government from the exercise of a power not delegated—its ultimate effect, to protect those rights which have been guaranteed by the Federal Constitution. There is

nothing directory, or enactive, or proposed for enactment.

“ It is restrictive and directed against a prohibition which is covertly contained in the bill. Though it is not expressly declared that slavery shall be prohibited in Oregon, this could be virtually enacted by the twelfth section of the bill, which gives validity and operation to the laws enacted by ‘ the Provincial Government established by the people ’ who inhabit that Territory. It is known that one of the laws passed by the people of Oregon prohibits slavery. To give validity to these laws is, therefore, equivalent to the passage of a law by Congress to prohibit slavery in that Territory. Does Congress possess such power ?

“ If the right to migrate with their property to territory belonging to the United States attaches equally to all their citizens, and if, as I have been credibly informed, citizens have migrated with their slaves to Oregon, to pass the bill before us, without amendment, is equivalent to the abolition of slavery by the Federal Government. Entertaining this opinion I submitted an amendment to meet the case distinctly and singly. Now, for the first time in our history, has Congress, without the color of compact or compromise, claimed to discriminate in the settlement of Territories,



against the citizens of one portion of the Union and in favor of another. This, taken in connection with all which is passing around us, must excite the attention of Senators to the fact, and force on our minds the conclusion, that herein is sought to be established a precedent for future use. Here, upon the threshold, we must resist, or abandon forever the claim to equality of right and consent to be a marked caste, doomed, in the progress of national growth, to be dwarfed into helplessness and political dependence. As equals the States came into the Union, and by the Articles of Confederation equal rights, privileges, and immunities were secured to the citizens of each; yet, for asserting that, in this case, the Federal Government shall not authorize the destruction of such equality, we have been accused of wishing to claim for the citizens of the Southern States unusual rights under the Constitution. This accusation comes badly from those who insist on provisions for exclusion; and cannot find its application to a demand that nothing shall be done to affect the constitutional rights of property. We do not ask of the Federal Government to grant us privileges, but to forbear to interfere with existing rights—rights which existed anterior to the formation of the Constitution, which were recognized in that instrument, and

which it is made the duty of the Federal Government, as the agent of our Union, to protect and defend.

“ Such obligations as belong to other species of property, no more nor less, we claim as due to our property in slaves. Nor can this claim be denied without denying the property right to which it attaches. This, it has been contended, is the creation of local law, for which such laws were made ; and with an air of concern we are told that it is not proposed to interfere with slavery as it exists in the States, because the Constitution secures it there. Sir, slavery is sustained, but was not created by the local law of the States in which it exists ; nor did those States ask of the Federal Government to secure or maintain it within their borders ; beyond their own jurisdiction, and there only, is the protection of Federal laws required. Before the formation of our confederacy slavery existed in the colonies, now the States of the Union ; and but for the Union the States would have no legal recognition beyond the limits of the territory of each. But when the fathers of the republic had achieved its independence, they sought to draw closer the bonds of Union, and to remove all cause for discord and contention. For this holy purpose they met in counsel and

formed the Constitution under which we live. This compact of Union changed the relation of the States to each other in many important particulars, and gave to property and intercourse a national character. Property in persons held to service was recognized; in various and distinct forms it became property under the Constitution of the United States, was made coextensive with the supremacy of the Federal laws, its existence subject only to the legislation of sovereign States, possessing powers not drawn from, but above the Constitution. Thus provision was made for the recovery of fugitive slaves, and the question of right to such property was as absolutely precluded as the guilt or innocence of one charged with "treason, felony, or other crime." In both cases it was made the duty of the State authorities to deliver up the fugitive on demand of the State from which the felon fled in the one case, and of the person to whom the labor is due in the other."

Mr. Davis here quoted the Second Section of the Fourth Article of the Constitution, and the Ninth Section of the First Article, and continued:

"Could there be a more distinct recognition of the property right in slaves? Here is not only a permission to import, but a duty to be laid upon them as a subject of commerce.

The fact that an exception was made against the entire control of such importation by Congress is conclusive that but for such exceptions it would have been embraced in the general grant of powers to the Federal Government to regulate commerce. If the framers of the Constitution had intended to recognize no other than the right to recapture fugitives—if they had denied the right of property in persons—they would not have used the word importation, as found in the clause of the Constitution just cited. In further support of this opinion I would refer to the fact that the exception was so strictly construed that laws prohibiting such importation into Territories not included in the exception were enacted. . . .

“To those who argue against this existence of the property in slaves beyond the limits of the States which they inhabit, as an unequal obligation and unusual right, I will render the admission that but for the Constitution the right to property in slaves could not have been extended beyond the State which possessed them. But gentlemen should recollect that all the territory northwest of the river Ohio, from which five non-slave-holding States have been carved, was originally the property of Virginia, and but for the compact of our Union the institutions

of that State would have extended over it. This territory, thus interposed between the North Atlantic States and the vast region which has been acquired west of the Mississippi, must have prevented those States from all such acquisition. What, under this contingency, would have been the relative size of the slave- and non-slave-holding territory? The answer to this inquiry should silence complaint of advantages accruing to the South from the guarantees of the Constitution.

“ To avoid the possibility of misconstruction, I repeat that we do not seek to establish slavery upon a new basis ; we claim no such power from the Federal Government. We equally deny the right to establish or to abolish slavery. We only ask that those rights of property which existed before the Constitution, and which were guaranteed by it, should be protected. If it can be shown that the Southern States would, as independent sovereignties, have possessed no rights of extension, or that the right of territorial acquisition was transferred to the Federal Government, subject to the condition that it should be used for the benefit of the Northern States exclusively, then, we shall have what has not yet been presented, a foundation for the assumption that from all territory

thus acquired slavery or involuntary servitude should be forever excluded. Sectional rivalry, stimulated by the desire for political aggrandizement, party zeal, local jealousies, and fanaticism, maddened by recent success, have each brought their contribution to the mass of assertion which has been heaped upon the claim of the South to an equal participation with the North in the enjoyment of the territory belonging in common to the State. But assertion is not proof; abuse is not demonstration; and that claim, sustained by justice and supported by the staff of truth, stands yet unbent beneath the mountain of error which has been accumulated upon it.

“ The various modes which have been proposed to exclude slave-holders from entering territory of the United States with their property, may be referred to three sources of power—the Federal Government, the territorial inhabitants, and the law of the land anterior to its acquisition by the United States.

“ The Federal Government can have no other powers than those derived from the Constitution. It is the agent of the States; has no other authority than that which has been delegated; cannot, by the character of its creation and the nature of its being have any inherent, independent power. To the Constitution, as the letter of authority for this

Federal agent, one must look for every grant of power. All which is not given is withheld; all which is prohibited is doubly barred. It is not to be supposed that sovereign States, when forming a compact of Union, would confer upon the agent of such compact a power to control the destiny of the States; nor is it in keeping with the avowed objects 'to insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, and promote the general welfare,' that it should be used to destroy the balance of power between the States. Were one portion of the Union to increase while the other remained stationary, the result would be reached, in the course of years, which led to the war of our Revolution and the separation of the colonies from the mother country. What would it profit a minority to have representatives in Congress, if opposed to a majority of mastering strength, and of will, as well as power, to sweep away all the protecting barriers of the Constitution? It was not for representation in Parliament that the fathers of the republic dissolved the political band which connected them with the parent government, but to maintain the freedom and equality which could not be secured by a hopeless minority in common legislation—to defend their inalienable rights from aggression by those who were irresponsible to

them—that they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. To such men it was of paramount importance, in forming a general Government, to guard against interference with domestic institutions, and to preserve such equality among the different sections and interests as would secure each from aggression by the others. This purpose is deeply graven on the Constitution, pervades it as a general spirit, and appears both in its grants and prohibitions. Thence arose the different basis of representation in the two houses of Congress; the limitation of the power to regulate commerce among the States; the prohibition against interference with private property; against discrimination in favor of one part over another; the partial representation of persons held to service; and the many other provisions which will occur to Senators, illustrative of the design to preserve such equality as is necessary to prosperity, to harmony, to union among sovereigns. . . .

“The question, then, is reduced to this: Has the Federal Government, under the grants of the Constitution, power to prohibit ‘slavery’ in the Territories of the United States? The right to property in slaves being recognized by the Constitution, the question is convertible into another: Has the



Federal Government the right to exclude a particular species of property from the territory of the United States, and thus confine the enjoyment of its advantages to a portion of their citizens? A proposition so repugnant to justice, so violative of the equal rights which every citizen of the United States has in the common property, so destructive of the equality in privileges and immunities secured by the Constitution, would seem to be answered by its statement. Yet, palpable as the outrage appears, it has been perpetrated in legislative resolutions by eleven States of the Union, bound by the Federal compact to recognize the co-equality of the States, and repeatedly asserted by Senators in this chamber, pledged to maintain the Constitution. This Federal Government, designed to render more perfect the Union of the States, and to promote their common defence, is thus to become the most formidable enemy of some, the great seedsman of discord among all.

“The Union of the States into one confederacy gave no power to destroy local rights of property, or to change the condition of persons; but much to protect and preserve the existing rights of property and relative condition of persons, by extending the limits

of their recognition and enlarging the provisions for their security. Thus the Federal Government cannot take 'private property,' except for 'public use,' and by making 'just compensation' therefor. The States cannot pass laws to impair the obligation of contracts. Duties cannot be imposed on articles of commerce passing from the limits of one State to another ; nor apprentices, indentured servants, or slaves, by escaping into another State, be discharged from their obligations under the laws of that from which they fled. In these and similar instances the Federal Government can do, and has done, much which is beyond the power of a State, to protect and enlarge the value of property. To determine what shall be property, what the condition of persons, are functions of sovereignty beyond its delegated authority, which can only be exercised by a sovereign State within its limits, and beyond that, by the majority of States required to amend the Constitution. I deny, then, that the Federal Government may say to any class of citizens, you shall not emigrate to Territory which belongs in common to the people of the United States ; equally deny that it can say what property shall be taken into such Territory, or legislate so as to impair, after his arrival in the Territory, any of

the pre-existing rights of the emigrant to the property he may carry with him.

“ Many of the reasons and principles presented to establish the absence of power in the Federal Government to exclude slavery from Territory belonging to the United States bear with force against the second class of opinions—that the power rests in the territorial inhabitants. In the unwearied search of those who, from the foundation of our Government, have sought, in every quarter, for the fountains of power by which the sovereignty of the States might be submerged, this, until recently, remained undiscovered. When Territorial governments were first established in the Territories, now the States of the Northwest, a very different doctrine obtained, and quite opposite was the practice under it. Then, though the foreign inhabitants were mainly those who had taken part with us in the wars against Great Britain, they were not considered so capable of self-government as to be intrusted with the power of local legislation; and the restricted governments, established in Indiana and Michigan, were required to adopt the laws of some State in the Union for their rule and government. Thus, in relation to French settlers at Vincennes, and Canadian refugees in Michigan, it was decided.

“ Now, Sir, for whom is it proposed to reverse the decision, not only so far as to recognize local legislation, but to admit the power to pass fundamental laws controlling the action of Congress, and determining the future policy and institutions of Oregon? For a small settlement, composed to a large extent of the late dependents of the Hudson Bay Company, subjects of the British crown; the very men who were arrayed against us to dispute our right to the soil; the same who, by fraud and violence, wrested from our citizens their property and possessions on the Columbia River; the same who, in violation of the faith of our treaty with Great Britain for the joint occupancy of Oregon, made regulations the effect of which was to destroy the valuable furs in that portion of the country which they expected to become exclusively the property of the United States, while they were preserved in that which was expected to pass, at a subsequent date, to the sovereignty of Great Britain. So much for those who formed a large, if not controlling, part of the population of Oregon, when the policy of excluding slavery was adopted there.

“ Shall they be permitted to sit in judgment on the constitutional rights of American citizens? Shall they decide the future institutions of our Territory? . . . . .

“ I have said that the power to prohibit the introduction into Oregon of slavery, as recognized under the Constitution, is such control over property and persons as can only be exercised by sovereignty. If this be correct, the proposition to leave the whole subject to the territorial inhabitants is equivalent to acknowledging them to be sovereign over the Territory. If they are so by their own right, then it is not ‘ territory belonging to the United States.’ If it be territory of the United States, Congress has no right to surrender the sovereignty of the States over to it ; no right to intrust to other hands the formation of the institutions which are in future to characterize it. In connection, however, with this proposition, I have spoken of one portion of the territorial inhabitants as men having no claim upon our confidence, and suggested that there were other inquiries than those connected with their patriotism which required consideration in relation to the other portions of the settlers in Oregon.

“ Are they statesmen? Have they such political experience and wisdom that the settled practice of the country should be changed in order that they may fix the fundamental principles on which their future institutions shall rest ; that they may lay the corner-stone of that republican edifice which

is in aftertime to overlook the Pacific? Or are they, as we have reason to believe them, missionaries of religion, whose studies have been devoted to subjects which, however high and holy have not been those which would qualify them for the labor of forming temporal governments? And, beyond these, traders, trappers, adventurers in the forests and on the mountains, whose pursuits and character have least led them to anticipate, or to value, the forms and blessings of civil government? . . .

“To the citizen who presses beyond the limits of civilization to open up to cultivation and settlement the forest domain of the United States, I have always been willing to extend protection, and such peculiar advantages over other joint owners of the common stock as are due to the services he has rendered to the common interests. But the civil rights, the political principles of the Government are not to be transferred to those who shall be first in the race to reach newly acquired possessions, or who shall by accident be found upon them. To point this opinion by a single application, I will refer to a large body of American citizens, who, under the control of religious enthusiasm, have gone beyond the limits of State jurisdiction to found a sectarian colony in the unexplored wilderness of

the Flamath Lake. My remarks will, of course, be understood to apply to the Mormons, and I introduce the case to ask if any one is prepared to welcome the consequences to civil and religious liberty which would flow from the exercise of sovereignty by them over the country of which they may take possession ? ”

Mr. Davis then showed the fallacy of the theory that the inviolability of the law, as it exists at the period of acquisition of new territory, could convey the power to exclude slavery from a Territory of the United States ; although under this principle slavery could be established in Oregon, as it had existed under the laws both of France and Spain in the provinces and at the dates referred to. But, as he demonstrated, “ the laws of a proprietor, as far as they conflict with the principles of the Constitution, are abrogated by the fact of acquisition ; that territory of the United States is the common property of all the people of the United States ; that sovereignty of the territory remains with them until it is admitted as an independent State into the Union ; and that each citizen of the United States has an equal right to emigrate into such territory, carrying with him any species of property recognized by the Constitution until sovereignty attaches it to the

Territory by its becoming a State, or until the sovereign States, by agreement or by compact, shall regulate specifically the character of property which shall be admitted into any particular Territory."

This was the earliest formal announcement of principles, in reference to this subject, which Mr. Davis maintained with unwavering consistency during every subsequent phase of the territorial controversies.

Mr. Davis in this debate, also, for the first time in Congress, discussed the burning question of negro slavery. He said:

"It has been usual for Southern men to decline any discussion about the institution of domestic slavery, in the midst of which they have grown up, and of which they may be supposed to know something, however vituperative and unfounded the accusation made against it. Agreeing in the general propriety of the course, I, nevertheless, propose on this occasion to depart from the ordinary practice.

"The question is forced upon us by our Northern brethren to such extent that silence, if persevered in, might be construed into admission of the truth of their accusations. In debates of Congress, by the press, by legislatures of the States, in the pulpit, and in primary assemblies it has become custom-



ary to denounce slavery as a political evil, as a burden on the Government; as the sin and opprobrium of the nation; as destructive of good order and human advancement; as a blighting curse on the section where it exists; and a gangrene, extending its baleful influences to every portion of the Union. Now, sir, upon what do these assumptions rest? Have we been less faithful as citizens? Have riots, conflagrations, or destruction of private property been more frequent in the slave than in the non-slave States? Have their churches been less harmonious, their divines less pious, their statesmen less eminent, their soldiers less efficient than yours? If not, then why this unwarrantable denunciation, why this unfounded assumption? If it be a sin, you are not otherwise involved than by your connection with its introduction; with its existence you have nothing to do. As owners of the commercial marine, you were the importers of Africans; you sold them in the South. You are parties to a compact which recognizes them as property throughout the United States, and secures to their owners rights which, but for the Confederation, would have been local. Show, then, your repentance, if you feel any, for having contributed to the increase of this property, by observing the obligations imposed by the circumstances of

the case upon you, and the rights recognized in the fundamental, paramount laws of our Union. The Constitution did not create the institution of domestic slavery; it was no part of the object for which it was formed to determine what should be the property; but an important portion of its duty to generalize and protect the rights of citizens beyond the limits of State jurisdiction. From this duty have arisen all the intermediate acts in relation to slave property. Yet, at this late period of the practice under our Constitution, Senators assert that slavery is so purely local that, if a master pass with his slave into the limits of a State, or Territory, where such slavery is not recognized by local law, the slave by that act becomes free. This is in keeping with the legislation of those States in which the legal and constitutional obligation to surrender fugitive slaves have been nullified. It is in keeping with the repeated declaration, here made with the condescending air of a sovereign granting a favor, that there is no intention to interfere with slavery as it exists in the States; but that its further extension cannot be permitted.

“Do Senators forget that the Government is but the agent, the creature of the States; that it derives its power from them; not they their rights and institutions from it?”

“Slavery existed in the States before the formation of the Constitution; it needed no guarantee within their limits; its recognition beyond this was part of the more perfect Union; as its protection against all enemies whomsoever is part of the common defence for which that Constitution was adopted.

“There is not a more prominent feature in the Federal compact than the prohibition of the States to interfere with commerce. But if a citizen of Maryland cannot pass through Pennsylvania or Ohio, on his way to Kentucky or Missouri, without submitting his property to the test of those States through which he is merely travelling, the right of free commerce among the States has no practical value. The right to uninterrupted transit is not varied by the character of the property—the power is the same, whether the question arise upon a slave or a bale of goods. There is no discretionary power, and a total prohibition would be less offensive than an insidious distinction, claiming to spring from a moral superiority. Each State is responsible for its own institutions. The sovereignty and co-equality of all the States forbid the idea of moral responsibility on the part of one for the acts of another.

“If slavery be a sin, it is not yours. It does not rest upon your action for its origin,

or your consent for its existence. It is a common law right to property in the service of man ; it traces back to the earliest government of which we have any knowledge, either among Jews or Gentiles. Its origin was divine decree—the curse upon the graceless son of Noah. Slavery was regulated by the law given through Moses to the Jews. Slaves were to be of the heathen, and with their offspring to descend by inheritance ; thus, in the main particulars, being identical with the institution as it exists among us. It was foretold of the sons of Noah that ‘ Japheth should be greatly extended, that he should dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan should be his servant.’

“ Wonderfully has the prophecy been fulfilled ; and here, in our own country, is the most striking example. When the Spaniards discovered America, they found it in possession of the ‘ Indians.’ Many tribes were enslaved, but the sons of Shem were not doomed to bondage. They were restless, discontented, and were liberated, because they were unprofitable. Their places were supplied by the sons of Ham, brought across the broad Atlantic for this purpose. They came to their destiny and were useful and contented. Over the greater part of the continent, Japheth now sits in the tents of Shem

and in extensive regions Canaan is his servant.

“Let those who possess the best opportunity to judge, the men who have grown up in the presence of slave institutions, as they exist in the United States, say, if their happiness and usefulness do not prove their present condition to be the accomplishment of an All-wise decree. It may have for its aid the preparation of that race for civil liberty and social enjoyment.

“Compare the slaves in the Southern States with recently imported Africans as seen in the West Indies, and who can fail to be struck with the increased improvement of the race; whether physically, morally, or intellectually considered? Compare our slaves with the free blacks of the Northern States, and you will find the one contented, well provided for in all their physical wants, and steadily improving in their moral condition; the other miserable, impoverished, loathsome for the deformity and disease which follow after penury and vice, covering the records of the criminal courts, and filling the penitentiaries. Mark the hostility to caste, the social degradation which excludes the able from employment of profit and trust, and leaves the helpless to want and neglect. Then turn to the condition of this race in the States of the

South, and view them in the relation of slaves. There, no hostility exists against them—the master is the natural protector of his slave; and public opinion, common feeling, mere interest would not allow him to neglect his wants. Those who urge that the exclusion of slavery from the Territories does not exclude the slaveholder, because he may dispose of his property before emigration, show such inability to comprehend the attachment which generally subsists between a master and his slaves, that I will only offer to them interest as a motive for the care which is extended to those of the sick, and adequate provision to all. Such is the difference between the condition of the free and slave blacks under conditions most favorable to emancipation. Does it warrant the desire on the part of any friend of that dependent race to hasten upon them responsibilities, for which they have shown themselves so unequal? If any shall believe that the sorrow, the suffering, the crime which they witness among the free blacks of the North have resulted from their degradation by comparison with the white race around them, to such I would answer: Does the condition of St. Domingo, of Jamaica give higher evidence? Or, do the recent atrocities in Martinique encourage better hopes?

“Sir, this problem is one which must bring its own solution. Leave natural causes to their full effect, and when the time shall arrive at which emancipation is proper, those most interested will be most anxious to effect it. But as the obligation is mutual, so must the action be joint; and it is quite within the range of possibility that the masters may desire it when the slaves will object, as was the case when the serfs of Russia refused to be liberated by their landlords.

“Leave the country to the South and West open, and speculation may see in the distant future slavery pressed by a cheaper labor to tropical regions, where less exertion being required to secure a support, their previous preparation will enable them to live in independent communities.

“They must first be separated from the white man, be relieved from the condition of degradation which will always attach to them while in contact with a superior race, and they must be elevated by association and instruction; or, instead of a blessing, liberty would be their greatest curse. Under these considerations, I cannot view the policy proposed to confine them to the present limits of the free States, as having one point, either of humanity or sound policy, to recommend it, or that it can do otherwise than perpetuate

slavery even beyond its natural terms in the States where it now exists."

Thus, inch by inch, did this patriot sentinel dispute our enemy's advance, knowing, nevertheless, that the devotion he manifested to his own people and section was not the road to national honors.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

### "CUBAN OFFERS."

IN the spring of 1848, we lived in the house next door to the United States Hotel, and went in to our meals across a little bridge that communicated with the dining-room. Governor McWillie, of Mississippi, and his family, Mr. and Mrs. Toombs, of Georgia, and Mr. and Mrs. Burt, of South Carolina, made up our "mess." Mrs. Burt was the niece of Mr. Calhoun, and a very handsome and amiable woman. Her husband was a strong-hearted, faithful, honest man who agreed with Mr. Calhoun in most things. We did not know his full worth then, and mistook him for simply an elegant man, formed to adorn society; but when he was tried by the fires of adversity, the metal that was in him shone without a grain of alloy.

Mr. and Mrs. Toombs were both comparatively young, and one could scarcely imagine a wittier and more agreeable companion than he was. He was a university man, and had kept up his classics. He had the personal habits of a fine gentleman, and talked

such grammar determinately, not ignorantly, as the negroes of this day eschew—unless he became excited, and then his diction was good, his wit keen, and his audacity made him equal to anything in the heat of debate.

He loved Alexander H. Stephens with a tenderness that was almost pathetic, and was as much beloved by him.

They were very sharply contrasted personally. Mr. Toombs was over six feet tall, with broad shoulders; his fine head set well on his shoulders, and was covered with long, glossy black hair, which, when speaking, he managed to toss about so as to recall the memory of Danton.

His coloring was good, and his teeth brilliantly white, but his mouth was somewhat pendulous and subtracted from the rest of the strong face. His eyes were magnificent, dark and flashing, and they had a certain lawless way of ranging about that was indicative of his character. His hands were beautiful, and kept like those of a fashionable woman. His voice was like a trumpet, but without sweetness, and his enunciation was thick.

Mr. Stephens was not small, but he looked so, from the shortness of his body. The shape of his head was unpolished and immature. His arms were disproportionately

long, and his beardless, wrinkled face gave him the look of one born out of season. His eyes were clear hazel, and had a fine, critical, deliberate expression that commanded attention. His voice was thin, and piercing like a woman's, but there the resemblance ended. His was a virile mind sustained by an inflexible will; and, in all matters of importance, Mr. Toombs came up, in the end, on Mr. Stephens's side.

Mr. Stephens studied only legal and governmental books, but Mr. Toombs loved books of the imagination, travels, anything that would help him (as the English ambassador said once of him) "to utter some of his brilliant paradoxes." During the time of the highest excitement over the compromise measures, when Mr. Toombs was on his feet some twenty times a day, he arose at daylight, took French lessons with his daughters, and became a good French scholar so far as reading the language went. He would sit with his hands full of the reporter's notes on his speeches for correction, with "*Le Médecin malgré lui*" in the other hand, roaring over the play.

I said to him, "I do not see how you can enjoy that so much."

He answered, "Whatever the Lord Almighty lets his geniuses create, He makes

someone to enjoy ; these plays take all the soreness out of me."

Mr. Davis and he were never congenial in their tastes ; their habits and their manners were entirely diverse ; but we all went on amicably enough, as he was very fond of Mrs. Toombs, who was a pleasant, kindly woman, and cheerful like her husband.

About the beginning of the summer, when our "mess" had separated and left us alone in the house, one evening I went into the drawing-room, which, on account of the heat, and according to the fashion of that day, was left with only the moonlight to illuminate it. I found there a light-haired man sitting very still beside one whose glowing eyes and silvery hair made points of light in the room. Supposing them to have come on business with my husband, I moved away to the extreme end of the room, and when Mr. Davis came in they talked in whispers for some time, and eventually Mr. Davis rose, evidently declining some offer, saying, "I deem it inconsistent with my duty ; you must excuse me."

As they left he said: "The only man I could indicate to you just now is one in whom I have implicit confidence: Robert E. Lee"—(I think he called him Major Robert E. Lee). The gentlemen left, and I pressed him to tell me what they want-

ed. He confided to me that they were General Lopez and another, also a Cuban ; as he is still living, his name is not mentioned. They had invited Mr. Davis to take charge of an expedition to liberate Cuba, and had offered to deposit \$100,000 for me, before their departure, with another \$100,000 assured when successful, or a very fine coffee plantation. Of course I was terrified, and grateful to know that the service had been declined. A few days afterward, I was in the drawing-room when an officer came in, that I thought the handsomest person I had ever seen—his manner, too, was the impersonation of kindness. He introduced himself as Major Lee. Mr. Davis came in at once, and the handsome stranger and he had a long conversation. Major Lee had been offered the same place, and did not think it consistent with his duty to the U. S. Government to accept it. He came to advise with Mr. Davis and to say this.

Less than two months afterward, General Lopez sat strapped in a garrote chair, and was executed with several Americans of good social position, who had been persuaded to join him. One of them, Clement Stanford, an exceedingly daring and bright young man from Natchez, and an enthusiast for liberty, was the uncle of the Dean of the Medical

Faculty of New Orleans, Stanford E. Chaille, M.D.

Very little of Mr. Davis's time was devoted to the claims of society. He was so imperious to the influence of anything but principle in shaping his political course, that he underrated the effect of social intercourse in determining the action of public men, and never sought to exert it in behalf of his own policy. In consequence, we went out but little, and spent our evenings together, he in making the more important corrections in the printer's proof of his speeches—after which I attended to the minor details—or in dictating letters to his constituents; and many were the jests and anecdotes he interspersed for my amusement throughout this otherwise dull work. In rare cases, where he was attached to the friends who gave the invitation, he accepted.

In those days, when mammas considered the "Pickwick Papers" too coarse for their daughters' perusal; when "Don Juan" was forbidden on pain of excommunication from the guild of delicate-minded women; when "Devereux" and "The Disowned" were placed behind the other books on the shelves of the library, as unfit for the eyes of ladies; when George Sand and Paul de Kock were named with bated breath, and the young people knew them not;

when Miss Austen's correct ladies and gentlemen walked serenely across the literary stage and looked their approval of their equally prudent audience; when Lady Delacour's duel with Harriet Freke was considered an incident to be deprecated while reading Miss Edgeworth's novels, and "Lady Audley's Secret" was held in reserve and not to be confided lightly to the young; when we still argued hotly over the relative merits of *Di. Vernon* and *Belinda*; when some old-fashioned girls wept over "*Thaddeus of Warsaw*," and there were even some who yet gazed lovingly at Amanda Fitz-Allen's tearful fainting form as it was borne off from Lord Mortimer — Frederika Bremer's "*Neighbors*" gave us our first glimpse of Swedish everyday life. *Petræa's* nose was a matter of widespread sympathy, and we laughed over the *Bersekers* like her Swedish compatriots. "*The President's Daughters*," too, were household friends, and Miss Bremer's coming to the United States on a tour of pleasure was hailed as a boon in store for those who loved her, for the joy she gave.

In the summer of 1848 Miss Bremer came to Washington on her way to South Carolina and the Southwest, and Mrs. Seaton, at whose hospitable, graceful home most of the notable people who visited the capital were

charmingly entertained, invited Mr. Davis and me to meet her. He told me in confidence that he had not read much in Miss Bremer's books, and only remembered some girl's trouble about her nose, "which, as she was ugly, did not concern me." However, I was full of the happy anticipation of seeing the authoress of my favorite books. One very hot summer evening, when the moon was nearly full, we went to Mr. Seaton's large old-fashioned house on C Street, to a "high tea."

When we entered, besides several agreeable men, Mrs. Webster, Mrs. Gales, Commodore Stockton, Mr. and Mrs. John Davis, of Massachusetts, and Senator Green, of Rhode Island, with his gray-haired, charming wife, were present.

Then and there ceased my desire to look with the naked eye upon the authors and authoresses "that warn, comfort, and command" us in our journey through the world. Miss Bremer was not more than five feet high, her nose was all Petræa had unavailingly tried to suppress, and red as a damask rose, of which color her face had also partaken; her eyes were a pale blue, and not large. On her head, concealing all but a few strands of dark hair, was a wondrous cap with aspiring bows of purple ribbon amidst a chevaux-de-frise of white lace. On her person was a large



round lace cape, then called a cardinal, which covered her from throat to feet, and was lined also with purple silk. We were all presented with due ceremony, and she was debonnaire, but rather a "mute inglorious" great one, as her English was deficient. After tea we adjourned to the gallery at the back of the house, overlooking an old-fashioned garden where "roses and lilies and daffadowndillies" disputed the ground with fine fruit-trees, but dwelt more peacefully with them than the useful and ornamental members of a community generally do. Just as we were comfortably seated in the silvery moonlight, a party of congenial women together, for the gentlemen had gone into the garden for a cosy smoke, Mr. Webster joined us in evening costume, or what was regarded then as such. He was rather inclined to be ornate in his dress, his usual afternoon costume being a blue coat with large brass buttons, with either a pair of nankeen trousers, or white linen. On this occasion they were white, and with his white expanse of waistcoat made him appear unusually large.

He was just from a dinner party at another friend's house, and was much more stately and inclined to conversation than was habitual with him. After being introduced to Miss Bremer and exchanging a few words with the

other ladies, he stood before her, erect and oratorical, and in his senatorial voice, pitched for the ears of the multitude, said, "Madam, you have toiling millions, we have boundless area." Miss Bremer looked deferentially up in his face and, gently interrupting him, said, "Y-e-s, very moch." Mr. Webster sighed and sat down silently, and in a few minutes Mr. Davis came and took him off to the smokers, where they kept him for an hour or more.

In the mean while, we spoke of Swedish music, and Mrs. Seaton begged Miss Bremer to play some of the popular airs for us. She consented and we went to the drawing-room to hear her. While Miss Bremer was "forging ahead" at a waltz, Mr. Webster entered, and not looking to see who was playing, spoke from the middle of the room to his wife: "My dear, we will say good-night; whenever a young lady is asked to play on an occasion like this, it is time for us old people to be going home."

Mrs. Webster, with a dismayed "dear me!" arose, and they made their adieux. Per contra, read Miss Bremer's account of this evening in her travels.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### ANTI-SLAVERY AGITATION.

Mr. Randolph thought and expressed the opinion to Mr. Buchanan, that the Anti-slavery agitation in the North was the only thing that had prevented the passage of a law in the Southern States for gradual emancipation.

When the agitation was fairly inaugurated the legitimate uses of the Post-office Department were perverted from their end by packing the mails full of incendiary documents urging our slaves to servile insurrections. General Jackson, on December 2, 1835, recommended that a penalty should be attached to the dissemination of these documents. A bill to restrict the circulation of incendiary matter was introduced and defeated, June 8th, by 19 to 25 votes. Not a single New England senator voted for General Jackson's measure.

From the State legislatures, the press, the county meetings, the pulpit, the different societies, no matter what their object, the lecturers, and above all the abolitionists, came

this downpour of petitions; yards of signatures were appended, and those who stood behind this mass of misrepresentation and invective presented it with insulting epithets and groundless accusations. The petitions prayed for the dissolution of the Union, reviled it as a compact with hell, and left nothing unsaid which could insult a patriotic, law-abiding, humane gentleman from the South.

Daily the Southern men were called on to suspend the legislation of Congress needful to carry on the business of the country, in order to hear themselves insulted by petitions reviling them and their institutions. Of course they were stung and resentful, but this was not their most moving cause of excitement. They felt that the results of these efforts might be the murder of their families, accompanied by shocking scenes of barbarity, and were deeply sensible of the fact that, if the sacred compact by which their rights of person and property had been guaranteed was disregarded in one case, there was no security for any other.

The legislatures of several States prohibited the rendition of fugitive slaves, and the master who demanded his rights in these States risked his life in doing so.

"From the day of the decision of *Prigg vs. the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, the

act of 1793 was a dead letter in the free States."

The Wilmot Proviso threw another fire-brand among the contending forces, and defeated the appropriation which would otherwise have been voted to facilitate peace between Mexico and the United States. One senator from a free State had said, in debate, that he would welcome the Americans, were he a Mexican, with bloody hands to hospitable graves."

In this state of excitement the Thirty-first Congress met, to deliberate upon the needs of the country ; but, instead, one party fulminated curses and abuse, and the other, under a sense of insult, repelled it with indignation ; indeed, the Southern leaders came at last to the conclusion that no people on earth were so alien to them at heart as those who wielded unlawful weapons against them, under the same flag and the same Constitution. The country was full of English emissaries sent out by the committees of Exeter Hall, who, knowing nothing about our institutions or the sentiments of either the free men of the South or their slaves, were hired to break up the public peace and amity by those who forgot that their miners and their ten-year-old white slaves, harnessed to the coal carts in the depths of the earth, had not

excited their attention or appealed so earnestly to their sympathies as did the comfortable negroes of the South, whose children were at that age free as air.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

THIRTY-FIRST CONGRESS, 1849—50.

THE first session of the Thirty-first Congress opened on Monday, December 3, 1849. In no preceding Senate had been seen more brilliant groups of statesmen from both South and North. Among the distinguished senators then, or soon subsequently to be, famous, were Davis, Calhoun, Clay, Webster, Benton, Corwin, Cass, Fillmore, Johnson, Stephen A. Douglas, Seward, Chase, Houston, Badger, of North Carolina; Butler, of South Carolina; Hamlin, Hunter, and Mason, of Virginia; Berrien, Mangum, and Pierre Soulé.

It was to this Congress that Mr. Clay presented his famous compromise resolutions, which may be regarded as the beginning of the last period of the long controversy between the sections before the secession of the Southern States from the Union.

It was memorable by the threatening prominence given to the Anti-slavery agitation, which was now beginning to overshadow all other Federal issues. The growth of the

Anti-slavery movement in the free States had been rapid and alarming. Its leaders were becoming more and more aggressive and contemptuous of constitutional guarantees and legal obligations. By refusals to restore fugitives from labor, by the circulation of petitions of the most offensive character to the South, and their presentation in Congress, by resolutions and speeches denunciatory of the South, passed at great public meetings and conventions, the Northern people were being prepared to insist on domination, instead of that equality of constitutional rights which, it had been hoped, had been secured by the founders of the Union, and was solemnly guaranteed by the Federal Constitution.

The great domain added to the Union by the war with Mexico was absorbed by the North, although it was the valor and military skill of Southern soldiers, chiefly, that won the victory. Southern resistance to these aggressions was soon organized in the political movements of the day. Mississippi led the way. A public meeting at Jackson, urged a State Convention to consider the alarming situation of the South, now that the balance of political equality had been destroyed and fraternal amity had ceased to exist, and to suggest remedies for asserting and maintaining her rights under the Consti-



tution. It began to be seen and announced in the South, that the only effectual remedy left was, or would soon be, the withdrawal of the Southern States from the Union. Such declarations were denounced in the North as threats to overawe her. In the South, every Legislature, with a single exception, characterized the exclusion of the domestic institution of the South from the common property of the whole country—the Territories of the United States—as an act in distinct violation of our constitutional rights ; while every Northern State, with one single exception also, passed resolutions in favor of the Wilmot Proviso.

“ Clay,” says his ablest biographer, “ was at heart in favor of the Wilmot Proviso.” His whole influence, at this great crisis, was exerted to allay the contest concerning constitutional rights, by compromises that settled nothing and satisfied nobody. The coming contention was for absolute equality of rights in the Territories — nothing less, nothing more. On that point, Mr. Davis and his associates of the States Rights school would not yield a hair’s breadth ; as, indeed, they could not do so without abandoning their rightful and constitutional equality with the North ; while Mr. Clay declared, on the contrary, that “ the South ought to yield the

point in dispute ; " and, sad as it is to render such a verdict on the dead statesman, his was an entirely selfish and personal consideration of the question.

Between sectional prejudices so hostile, and between politics and leaders so antagonistic, it was soon evident that no peaceful reconciliation was probable, and that the day of compromises was over. This was speedily demonstrated in the Senate.

The first sign of the beginning of an irreconcilable conflict between the sections was seen on December 20th. A resolution was offered (ostensibly as a compliment to the famous Irish temperance orator), that Theobald Mathew be permitted to sit within the bar of the Senate during the period of his sojourn in Washington. This resolution was favored by Mr. Seward and other Northern senators, but it was opposed by the Southern members, on the ground that Father Mathew, in the language of Senator Clemens, had " been charged with denouncing one portion of the Confederacy as little better than a band of lawless pirates."

Mr. Seward, in an insidious speech eulogizing Father Mathew's services as a temperance orator, ended by expressing the hope that the Senate would give evidence, by the unanimity with which they would pass the re-

solution, whether "if slavery should be an error, or if it be a crime, if it be a sin, we deplore its existence among us, and deny the responsibility of its introduction here; and, therefore, we shall not withhold from virtue the meed which is its due, because it happens to be combined in the person of one who exhibits not more devotion to virtue than to the rights of man."

Mr. Davis immediately rose and replied to this insincere and insidious effort to create further discord between the sections, under the pretext of honoring a distinguished foreign guest. He said: "I am glad to hear the Senator from New York (Mr. Seward) place this movement upon a distinct basis—to know that it is advocated because of the opinions in relation to domestic slavery which are ascribed to the individual named in the resolution.

"For years past, we have seen our fraternity disturbed, our country torn by domestic contention; even now we see our Government seriously embarrassed by a discussion the seeds of which were sown by British emissaries, who assumed the false pretext of philanthropy to mask their unholy design to kindle the fires of civil war among the United States. There was a time, sir, when an American feeling pervaded and ruled in this

country ; when every man worthy to be descended from the sires of our Revolution repulsed with loathing and scorn the foreign emissary who attempted to distract our nationality. Not even on questions of general policy and common interest would they permit the interference of others.

“ Has this passed away ? Now, when it requires all the forbearance of brotherhood to allay excitement, to calm irritation, to prevent pent-up feeling from bursting into strife, are we not only to permit, but to welcome, the intrusion of the stranger into this most delicate domestic question, which has ever threatened the peace and safety of our Confederacy ? Degenerate and unworthy of the sires from whom we derived our institutions and our Union, must that son be, who can thus court foreign interference, and grasp the hand in fellowship with which he expects to scatter over our land the seeds of a new and most mischievous species of domestic discord.

“ Sir, I have no wish to depreciate the labors, or to contest the merits, of him whose name is identified with the beneficent cause of temperance reformation. The good he has done to a portion of our race deserves the thanks of mankind. The heart pays a willing tribute to the benevolence of a labor like his ; and, who has not rejoiced in the

happy influence his mission has exercised over his unfortunate countrymen? Could it devolve upon the Senate to decide either of these points, there would, I suppose, be little difference of opinion among us. But it would not thence follow that, as a department of this Government, we should give testimonial of our approbation and accordance. Still less can this be claimed for the reason urged by the Senator from New York.

“ Thus presented, the question is, whether the United States Senate—partly composed of those who represent a slave-holding constituency—shall vote an extraordinary compliment to one known as the ally of Daniel O’Connell in his attempt to incite the Irishmen — naturalized citizens of the United States—to unite as a body with the abolitionists in their nefarious designs against the peace, the property, and the constitutional rights of the Southern States. An act of such obtrusive interference in our domestic affairs; a declaration of opinions so offensive; an attempt so mischievous, requires something more than a temporary silence to justify the unprecedented compliment which is claimed at our hand.

“ If, as the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. Clay) intimates, those opinions in relation to African slavery as it exists in this country,

have undergone a change, why was not such change avowed when an opportunity was kindly offered, as has been stated by the Senator from Alabama. His refusal to do so, under the circumstances connected with it, could not fail to have an injurious effect upon what is recognized as the great object of his visit ; and is, therefore, conclusive against the supposition of such a change having occurred. When opinions are gratuitously thrown upon the world, it is our right to note them, and, if mischievous, our duty to remember them. This is not to probe private sentiments, but to see that which is laid before us.

“ In the present case, exceptions have been taken not to the opinion of ‘ Father Mathew ’ on the subject of slavery, but to his conduct in attempting to instigate his countrymen, nationalized among us, to join in a crusade against institutions of their adopted country. Why, if he came purely as a missionary in the cause of temperance, should he have hesitated to disavow any purpose to interfere with the political relations of any portion of our citizens, or to assail any of the domestic institutions of our country? This was necessary, not to assure us against any supposed danger from this influence — our confidence in the allegiance of our citizens gave full security against that—but was neces-

sary to justify the attentions and courtesy which it was desired to offer. In default of such disavowals—under answers which are said to have been evasive, and with such advocacy as we have just heard—his attitude is that of one who comes covertly as a wolf in sheep's clothing; and I hold the Senator from New York to be the very best authority on that subject.

“Mr. President, in opposing this resolution, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I yield all that has been claimed for the success of ‘Father Mathew’ to the cause of temperance in Ireland; and certainly abate nothing of respect and sympathy because of his clerical character and the land of his nativity. If either one or the other had led me into error, it would have been that of compliance, not resistance. Irishmen, not allied with O’Connell and abolitionism, take, in my sympathies, the next place to our brethren; but the mere name of ‘Irish Patriot’ is not sufficient to be the controlling influence. My first duty, my nearest ties are at home, and I will say of the horde of abolitionists, foreign and domestic, that, if I had the power to exclude them all from this Chamber, I would not hesitate a moment to do it.” \*

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\* The next day after this speech he made a friendly call upon Father Mathew to express his respect for his temperance crusade.

I refer to this minor incident of Mr. Davis's record because it has been misrepresented and misconstrued as an evidence of intolerance, and as a want of respect for a distinguished representative of the Irish people, with whose cause, on the contrary, Mr. Davis always sympathized warmly. He thought temperance should be the outcome of individual will and conviction of the duty to be "temperate in all things," and would not be the better practised because of statutes which would destroy personal and community independence, and erect a system of espionage over private family matters.

On January 7th, the subject of slavery was again introduced into debate by the presentation of resolutions from the General Assembly of Vermont. In the course of the debate that followed, Mr. Davis replied to Mr. Hale, of New Hampshire. I quote a single extract only from his speech :

"Mr. President: I always enter into the discussion of the slavery question with feelings of reluctance; and only because I am forced to it by those who, having nothing to do with it, nevertheless indecently interfere in our domestic affairs here, have I done so.

"Sir, it is a melancholy fact that, morning after morning, when we come here to enter into the business of the Senate, our feelings



are harrowed up by the introduction of this exciting and profitless subject, and we are compelled to listen to insults heaped upon our institutions. Sir, there is no man who comes here to represent his constituency for high and useful purposes, and who feels upon himself the obligation of his oath to maintain the Constitution of the United States, who would thus act, from day to day, for the purpose of disturbing the useful legislation of the country, for no other purpose than to insert another brand into the flame which every reflecting, sober man now sees threatens to consume the fabric of our government.

“ We, of the South, stand now, as we have always stood, upon the defensive. We raised not the question ; but, when raised, it is our duty to defend ourselves. For one, sir, my purposes are to keep down this species of excitement both here and at home. I know the temper of those whom I represent, and they require no promptings to resist aggression or insult. I know their determination. It is well and deeply taken, and will be shown when the crisis comes. They make no threats against anyone, and least of all against the Union for which they have made such heavy and such continued sacrifices. They know their rights while they feel their wrongs ; and they will maintain the one, resent the other, if need be,

and preserve our Constitutional Union ; but the Union without the Constitution they hold to be a curse. With the Constitution, they will never abandon it. We, sir, are parties to the Union only under the Constitution, and there is no power known in the world that could dictate to my little State a Union in which her rights were continually disregarded and trampled upon by an unrestrained majority. The present generation, sir, all maintain the character their fathers bore. They well know how to sustain the institutions which they inherited, even by civil war, if that be provoked. They will march up to the issue and meet it face to face.

“ This is our position. You have not respected it. I know yours and cannot respect it, and, knowing it, I came to this session of Congress with melancholy forebodings—with apprehensions that this might be the last of our Government. I still trusted, however, in the intelligence and patriotism of the masses, for I have long since said that I could put no faith in politicians. I feel that they have raised a storm which they cannot control. They have invoked a spirit which they cannot allay and dare not confront. And yet, I believe that the descendants of the Franklins, the Hancocks, and the Adamses, if they saw our institutions about to be destroyed by a mean

and captious exercise of the power of demagogues to press to a fatal extremity aggressions upon our rights by the North, would rise up in their strength and would enforce the justice and obligations of the Constitution. This is no indication of any confidence which I put in their representatives ; with them I am ready to meet this issue face to face ; and if the representatives of that people see proper to sow the seeds of dissension and to influence the passions and prejudices of one section, while they drive the other by every possible provocation to the point of civil war, then all I have to say is that the representatives of the South, true to their constituency, are prepared to meet the issue here and now. If this is to be the hotbed of civil war ; if, from this as a centre, the evil is to radiate throughout our country, *here let the first battle be fought.* If gentlemen came here constantly to press upon us, strip us of our rights, to move the people of one section of the nation to hostility against the other, I hope that those who have brought the country to this crisis will meet the first test.

“ Mr. President : It is no part of the business of a Southern representative here to deliver panegyrics upon the attachment of his constituents to the Union. We have proved our love of the Union and our devotion to it

too often and too long to require such declarations. Let those who feel that it may be doubted make their declarations of fidelity to the Union ; we have nothing of the kind to do. If the State of Vermont chooses to send to the Senate of the United States insulting resolutions relating to her sister States, let the senators and representatives of that State do their duty in relation to them ; and, as I say nothing against a Sovereign State, I will only say to those senators, that I regret that Vermont has not now such constitutional scruples as actuated her in the War of 1812, and that she does not keep her resolutions within her own limits in the war of aggression, as she attempted to keep her troops during that War."

Mr. Davis was eminently conservative as well of the rights of the States under the Constitution as of the limitations of the powers of Congress. He adhered to the letter and the spirit of both, and guarded the treasury with the same jealous care that he exercised over the interests of his State. A notable instance of this consistency is evinced in the speech I quote.

On January 24th, in the debate on a resolution, directing the Library Committee to negotiate for the purchase of the MSS. of Washington's Farewell Address, Mr. Davis said :

“The value of the Farewell Address is two-fold : first, for the opinions contained in it, and, next, the authority from which they are derived. I am of the opinion that no benefit can result to the country or to the people generally by the owning of these sheets of MSS. No one, scarcely, will be allowed to read it, for it will have to be locked up securely, where it cannot be touched ; because, if handled, it would be soon worn out. It will, therefore, merely gratify the feelings to which the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. Clay) has so eloquently alluded, and to which undoubtedly every heart will respond—that feeling which endears everything pertaining to the beloved and venerated dead. Man is a being possessing feelings, sensations, and sympathies ; and allow me to say too, sir, that, although we may derive great pleasure from tracing the narratives of the glory of our ancestors, and the deeds of the men of celebrity in our own country, yet some physical memorial of them, some tangible, palpable object always addresses itself to our hearts and to our feelings.

“But are we, the representatives of the people, in making appropriations from the treasury, to be governed by feeling, and to draw money out of the public treasury to gratify our sentiments ? Certainly not. We

should regard no such feelings, but should act as practical men. We should become as nearly as possible an 'abstraction,' to use the expression of the gentleman from Kentucky ; as far as may be, divest ourselves of all feeling in legislation.

" If we are to indulge the desire to possess all objects associated with the ' Father of his Country,' we shall have to purchase the walking-canes he used, the medals, and other personal articles identified with him by possession. His residence, the battle-fields he illustrated, the routes of his marches through the old Thirteen States, over which he shed unfading glory ; all, all are closely associated with his memory. Shall they be purchased, too, and held as the property of the Government ? But what is there so sacred in the MSS. of this Address ? It is known to have been the production of Washington and one, at least, of his Cabinet — not the emanation of his mind alone. I feel no such respect as has been here expressed for it, and I cannot perceive how this MS. is to effect such happy results. Anyone can have a printed copy, and read it, who desires. There is nothing to be gained by the purchase of this MS., any more than there would be in the purchase of a walking-stick which Washington used. I may be pardoned for a want of veneration for

relics, or for symbols of the faith of the faithful; nay, more, for saying that a devotion to men which extends to the inanimate objects connected with them is an extreme unworthy of our people. We are utilitarians, and it is not in keeping with that character to be led away by sentiment. The rough sketch of this Address, connected with the work of others, and showing what was his own, would be far more valuable to me than this, the form to which it was modified and extended."

Mr. Davis took his own course, allying himself of necessity with no party—yielding to no mere sentimental view of duty, or allegiance. He conscientiously examined the Constitution of the Union as the conservator, guarantee, and limitation of his rights, and honorably abided by its authority.

Throughout this memorable session anti-slavery petitions were adopted by the leaders of the movement in the North to force the discussions of the slavery question into Congress. Early in February, a motion was made by Senator Hale, of New Hampshire, to receive a petition from inhabitants of Delaware and Pennsylvania, praying for the immediate and peaceful dissolution of the Union. Up to this date it had been the uniform practice to lay on the table without debate all resolutions relating to the slavery agitation.

But on this occasion a spirited debate followed Senator Hale's motion. Mr. Davis took part. He said:

"I rise merely to make a few remarks on the right of petition . . . It is offensive to recommend legislation for the dissolution of the Union; offensive to the Senate and to the whole country. If this Union is ever to be dissolved, it must be by the action of the States and the people. Whatever power Congress holds, it holds under the Constitution, and that power is but a part of the Union. Congress has no power to legislate upon that which will be the destruction of the whole foundations upon which their authority rests. I recollect, a good many years ago, that the Senator from Massachusetts who addressed the Senate this morning (John Davis), very pointedly described the right of petition as a very humble right—as the mere right to beg. This is my own view. The right peacefully to assemble, I hold, as the right which it was intended to grant to the people; that was the only right which had ever been denied in our colonial condition; the right of petition had never been denied by Parliament. It was intended only to secure to the people, I say, the right peacefully to assemble whenever they chose to do so, with intent to petition for a redress of grievances.



“ But, sir, the right of petition, though but a poor right, the mere right to beg, may yet be carried to such an extent that we are bound to abate it as a nuisance. If the avenues to the Capitol were obstructed so that members would find themselves unable to reach the halls of legislation because hordes of beggars presented themselves in the way, calling for relief, it would be a nuisance that would require to be abated, and Congress in self-defence would be compelled to remove them.

“ But such a collection of beggars would not be half so great an evil as the petitions presented here on the subject of slavery. They disturb the peace of the country; they impede and pervert legislation by the excitement they create; do more to prevent rational investigation and proper action in this body than any, if not all, other causes. Good, if ever designed, has never resulted, and it would be difficult to suppose that good is expected ever to flow from them. Why, then, should we be bound to receive such petitions to the detriment of the public business; or, rather, why are they presented? I am not of those who believe we should be turned from the path of duty by out-of-door clamor, or that the evil can be removed by partial concession. To receive, is to give cause for

further demands, and our direct and safe course is rejection.

“Yes, sir, their reception would serve only to embarrass Congress, to disturb the tranquillity of the country, and to peril the Union of the States. By every obligation, therefore, that rests upon us under the Constitution, upon every great principle upon which the Constitution is founded, we are bound to abate this as a great and growing evil.”

Mr. Davis's alert activity in the performance of the duties of his place is shown by the facts that, nearly a page of the index of the “Congressional Globe” is devoted to references to his participations in debates, and that the reports show that he discussed every phase of the Oregon, the slave, and the territorial questions, public lands and railroads, military affairs, appointments, proposed expenditures and appropriations, relief bills, post-offices and post-roads, and every important theme of senatorial discussion. He came home exhausted, and then from dusk until nearly daybreak corrected the reporter's notes, met his colleagues, and arranged the programme for measures to be introduced or combated, and his cheerfulness under all this turmoil and labor was uninterrupted. His health, never since his wound in Mexico very robust, suffered much from the effort to per-

form his social duties, and he, therefore, relinquished the attempt and did not mingle at all with society, except when our friends were invited to visit us. It was a period of his life that he remembered with just pride, and after a generation had passed he thus wrote of this Congress :

“The first session of the Thirty - first Congress (1849–50) was a memorable one. The recent acquisition from Mexico of New Mexico and California, required legislation from Congress. In the Senate, the bills reported by the Committee on Territories were referred to a select committee of which Mr. Clay was chairman. From this counsellor emanated the bills which, taken together, are known as the ‘Compromise Measures of 1850.’

“With some others, I advocated the division of the newly acquired territory by the extension to the Pacific Ocean of the Missouri Compromise line of 30° 30.’ This was not because of any inherent merit or fitness in that line, but because it had been accepted by the country as a settlement of the sectional question which, thirty years before, had threatened a rupture of the Union, and it had acquired in the public mind a prescriptive respect which it seemed unwise to disregard. A majority, however, decided other-

wise, and the line of political conciliation was then obliterated as far as it lay in the power of Congress to do. This result was effected almost exclusively by the representatives of the North.

“ However objectionable it may have been, in 1820, to adopt that political line as expressing a geographical definition of different sectional interests, and, however it may be condemned as the assumption by Congress of a function not delegated to it, it is to be remembered that the act had received such recognition and *quasi*-ratification by the people of the States as to give it a value which it did not rightfully possess. Pacification had been the fruit borne by the tree, and it should not have been recklessly hewn down and cast into the fire. The frequent assertion then made was that all discrimination was unjust, and that the popular will should be left untrammelled in the formation of new States. This theory was good enough in itself, and, as an abstract proposition, could not be gainsaid; but its practical application has but poorly sustained the expectations of its advocates. Retrospectively reviewed, under the mellowing light of time, and with the calm consideration we can usually give to the irremediable past, the Compromise Legislation of 1850 bears the impress of that sectional spirit so widely at

variance with the general purposes of the Union, and so destructive of the harmony and mutual benefit which the Constitution was intended to secure.

“The refusal to divide the territory acquired from Mexico by an extension of the line of the Missouri Compromise to the Pacific, was a consequence of the purpose to admit California as a State of the Union before it had acquired the requisite population, and while it was under the control of the military organization sent from New York during the war with Mexico, and disbanded in California upon the restoration of peace. The inconsistency of the argument against the extension of the line was exhibited in the division of the territory of Texas, by that parallel, and payment to the State of money to secure her consent to the partition of her domain. In the case of Texas, the North had everything to gain and nothing to lose by the application of the practice of geographical compromise on an arbitrary line. In the case of California, the conditions were reversed; the South might have been the gainer and the North the loser, by a recognition of the same rule.

“The compensation which, it has been alleged, the South received, was a more effective law for the rendition of fugitives from

service or labor. But it is to be remarked that the law provided for the execution by the General Government of obligations which had been imposed by the Federal compact upon the several States of the Union. The benefit to be derived from a fulfilment of that law, would be small in comparison with the evil to result from the plausible pretext that the States had been relieved from a duty which they had assumed in the adoption of the compact of Union. Whatever tended to lead the people of any of the States to feel that they could be relieved of their constitutional obligations by transferring them to the General Government, or that they might thus or otherwise evade or resist them, could not fail to be like the tares which the enemy sowed amid the wheat.

“It was reasonably argued that, as the Legislatures of fourteen of the States had enacted what was termed “personal liberty bills,” which forbade the co-operation of State officials in the rendition of fugitives from service or labor, it became necessary that the General Government should provide the requisite machinery for the execution of the law. The result proved what might have been anticipated—that those communities which had repudiated their constitutional obligations, which had nullified a previous

law of Congress for the execution of a provision of the Constitution, and had murdered men who came peacefully to recover their property, would evade or obstruct, so as to render practically worthless, *any* law that could be enacted for that purpose."

Mr. Davis records an interesting incident of his own life at this time:

"While the Compromise Measures of 1850 were pending, and the excitement concerning them was at its highest, I, one day, overtook Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, and Mr. Berrien, of Georgia, in the Capitol grounds. They were in earnest conversation. It was on March 7th—the day on which Mr. Webster had delivered his great speech. Mr. Clay, addressing me in the friendly manner which he had always employed since I was a school-boy in Lexington, asked me what I thought of the speech. I liked it better than he did. He then suggested that I should 'join the Compromise men,' saying that it was a measure that would probably give peace to the country for thirty years—the period that had elapsed since the adoption of the Compromise of 1820. Then, turning to Mr. Berrien, he said: 'You and I will be underground before that time, but our young friend here may have trouble to meet.' I, somewhat impatiently, declared my unwilling-

ness to transfer to posterity a trial which they would be relatively less able to meet than we were, and passed on my way."

President Buchanan made a plea of a somewhat similar kind when he said: "I hope, gentlemen, you will postpone any overt action until my term of office has ended." As the faculties decay, the aged deprecate a strife with which they feel they have not the force to contend.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

### MISSOURI COMPROMISE.

IN 1819-20, the question of admitting Missouri into the Union gave rise to heated discussions as to the right to impose restrictions upon slavery in any of the Territories, the common property of the whole United States. The Northern States desired to deny Missouri admission as a State and hold her in a territorial condition, unless a restriction could be imposed upon the holding of slaves within her borders. The Southern States felt this an unjust discrimination against their property rights, and the excitement grew warm and eager. Mr. Benton said, "This agitation came from the North and under federal lead, and soon swept both parties into its vortex."

Finally Missouri was admitted without any restriction against slavery, but it was imposed upon the remainder of the territory of Louisiana north and west of Missouri, and throughout the whole territory along the southern boundary line of Virginia and Kentucky: the latitude of  $36^{\circ} 30'$ . The same author

says, "This was called 'compromise,' and was all clear gain to the anti-slavery side of the question, done under the United Slave State vote in the Senate,\* the majority of that vote in the House of Representatives, and the undivided sanction of a Southern administration. It was a Southern measure, and divided free and slave soil far more favorably to the North than the ordinance of 1787. That divided about equally; this of 1820 gave about all to the North."† He goes on to say it abolished slavery over an immense area and opened no new territory to its existence, and for thirty years this was a subject of angry debate and sustained struggle. Mr. Clay, of Kentucky, when he saw the intense excitement over the Sectional Question, moved a joint committee of both houses, with the proviso that he was to appoint the persons to compose it. He sounded the members from each house and secured a caucus vote on the question, and having personally nominated the members for each committee, passed the bill to admit Missouri, and was for this reason called the author of the "Missouri Compromise." "This joint committee was the Pandora's

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\* Mr. Benton's statement seems to be at variance with the final vote as given in Benton's Abridgement, chapter vii., pp. 55 to 453.

† The vote 95 out of 100 Northern, 39 out of 76 Southern men.

box from which came the bitter apple of discord to which we owe the most of our disasters."

Mr. Davis wrote to Colonel John A. Parker, a gentleman of distinction in Virginia and in the South, who interrogated him on this subject: "Mr. Clay is credited with the paternity of the so-called Missouri Compromise of 1820.

"In 1850, when I was contending for the extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific Ocean, and claimed of Mr. Clay that consistency required of him to vote with me on that question, a colloquy ensued in which he emphatically denied the paternity of the 'Missouri Compromise,' all of which will be found in the 'Congressional Globe.'"

The strong men of each party were arrayed in sectional divisions, when Mr. Davis entered the Senate in 1850.

The "Wilmot Proviso" which had been introduced into the House, provided that none of the New Territory incorporated into the Union should be open to the introduction of slavery. This included California and New Mexico, at the gates of Texas and Louisiana. While the Congressmen from the Slave States protested against this "proviso" as a violation of their equal rights, under the Articles of Confederation and of

the Constitution, they were not averse to seeing the "proviso" passed by Northern votes, as that act would put beyond all question the hostile character of the legislation of the North upon the interests and constitutional rights of the South.

From time to time such hostile memorials had been presented by the House and Senate from the Abolition element at the North, that they had become a source of insult and irritation to the South. So much so, that the Southern senators and representatives called a meeting to consider whether it would not be advisable, in order to force the definite settlement of the question, to retire from both houses, and what means should be devised to put an end to these daily outrages. Mr. Davis believed that as the power of the North and South was very nearly, if not quite equal, then was the proper time to settle the contention, not by concessions of rights, but by defining them, so that in future further aggressions on the part of either party would be impossible. Unhappily, however, the Southern men were not united in their policy. Mr. Clay's influence carried off a part of them, under the idea that a compromise of some kind could be made which would give peace to the country, he hoped, during his life.

Mr. Webster's arguments convinced a portion of them that the Constitution had no force over any Territory other than that incorporated into States; that Territories had no rights, but were the absolute property of the States; that it required the specific legislation of Congress to give the Territories any rights, and those were not derived, and could not be, from the Constitution.

Mr. Clay was violently opposed to the extension of slavery, and he had his advocates among the Southern Congressmen. So, the defection from our ranks left the really serious men who, loving the Union, desired to protect it from the dangers they saw threatened its existence, in the attitude of agitators.

In the midst of this excited feeling throughout both sections, Mr. Clay conceived the idea of getting a joint committee of Senate and House to make a compromise of all the matters in dispute.

He incorporated the admission of California as a State, "Territorial Governments for Utah and New Mexico, the settlement of the Texas Boundary, Slavery in the District of Columbia, and the Fugitive Slave law all into one bill," called the Compromise Bill, in parliamentary phrase, and always spoken of as the "Omnibus Bill" by members of either house.

Mr. Clay's resolution set forth :

“ That, as slavery does not exist by law, and is not likely to be introduced into any of the territory acquired by the Northern States from the Republic of Mexico, it is inexpedient for Congress to provide by law either for its introduction into, or exclusion from, any part of said territory.”

In a speech on this resolution, Mr. Davis said :

“ But, sir, we are all called on to receive this as a measure of compromise. I look upon it as but a modest mode of taking that, the claim to which has been more boldly asserted by others : and that I may be understood upon this question, and that my position may go forth to the country in the same columns that convey the sentiment of the Senator from Kentucky, I here assert that never will I take less than the ‘ Missouri Compromise ’ line extended to the Pacific Ocean, with specific recognition of the right to hold slaves in the Territory below that line ; and that before such Territories are admitted into the Union as States, slaves may be taken there from any of the United States, at the option of their owners.”

This was the position generally taken by the Southern men true to their own people, and not looking forward to what, even at

that early day, made a politician too cosmopolitan to serve his own State faithfully, "a national reputation;" otherwise, a candidate for the Presidency.

Notwithstanding the great effort made by the free State party, the South was still, with all the defections from their ranks, strong enough to defeat Mr. Seward's revival of the "Wilmot Proviso resolution." "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude otherwise than by conviction for crime, shall ever be allowed in either of said Territories of Utah and New Mexico." This was defeated by an almost strictly Southern vote; five only being from the West and North. Yeas, 23; Nays, 33.

In the light that forty years have shed upon this struggle, it is interesting to recall a portion of an address presented to the Southern people by an organized meeting of their leading men, of whom Mr. Davis was one.

"But the reverse would be the case between the 'blacks' of the South and the people of the North. Owing their emancipation to them, they would regard them as friends, guardians, and patrons, and centre, accordingly, all their sympathy in them. The people of the North would not fail to reciprocate and to favor them, instead of the 'whites.' Under the influence of such feel-

ings they would not stop at emancipation. Another step would be taken ; to raise them to social and political equality with their former owners, by giving them the right of voting and holding public offices under the Federal Government. But when once raised to an equality, they would become the fast political associates of the North, acting and voting with them on all questions, and by this political union between them, holding the white race at the South in complete subjection. The 'blacks' and the profligate 'whites' that might unite with them, would become the principal recipients of Federal office and patronage."

Mr. Benton, in remarking upon this address, said :

"Far from passing any law to emancipate slaves in the States, no Congress has ever existed that has seen a man that would make such a motion in the House ; or, if made, would not be as unanimously rejected by one side of the House as the other—as if the unanimity would not be the same whether the whole North went out and let the South vote alone, or the whole South went out and let the North alone vote."

These two sharply contrasted views need no commentary now.

The manifesto of the South was signed by



Mr. Davis and thirty-nine other members of the House and Senate.

On March 4, 1850, Mr. Calhoun, being too weak to deliver his speech which he had arisen from his dying bed to present, asked Mr. James M. Mason to read it—which he did most admirably.

Mr. Calhoun,

Like some bold seer in a trance  
Seeing all his own mischance ;

knowing beyond peradventure that his last hours had come, sought to make his final appeal to the magnanimity and fraternity of the two sections, in the hope of impressing them with their imminent danger now that the balance of power had been lost between the North and South, by the admission of California. He was not able to be present during the reading of the speech, but the next day some attacks, which he considered unfair, having been made upon it, he came over from the old Capitol, where he was boarding, with what strength he might, to make a dying sally for the right. Mr. Dallas, the Vice-President, kindly sent for me and gave me permission to sit between two of the Senators' seats, on a stool. I was quite near Mr. Calhoun and saw him come in, supported on each side by a senator, breathing in short

gasps, emaciated to the last degree, his eyes shining with fever; but his eagle glance swept the Senate in the old lordly way. Seeing me, he gave me one burning hand as he passed, and whispering "My child, I am too weak to stop," he passed on and dropped into his seat. Mr. Benton looked on him with a tender glance and said, *sotto voce*, "I have nothing to say;" but Mr. Foote, of Mississippi, got up to answer the speech, and baited him for over an hour. Mr. Calhoun, rising with difficulty from time to time, answered in a weak voice, but to the point, partly bending his tall form from over the desk as he found his strength failing. During Mr. Foote's remarks, Mr. Benton kept up an aside. "No brave man could do this infamy. Shame, shame!"

Mr. Davis and several other senators tried to save Mr. Calhoun the fatigue of responding, but could not.

By this time it became clear that Mr. Calhoun would die in our presence\* with a little more. And at last his friends, supporting him on either side, bore him from the Senate chamber, followed by the loving sympathy of many and the anxious looks of the majority who revered him.

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\* See Appendix to Congressional Globe, pp. 269 et seq. 31st Congress, 1st session.

The next day Mr. Webster made his great compromise speech, and the Senate, before the morning hour, was again crowded from the gallery to the floor ; outside of the railing was a parterre of brilliant palpitating color, a solid phalanx of ladies ; on the steps of the Vice-President's seat every available inch was occupied, and even between the senators, seated on the floor, the rosy faces and waving plumes of ladies made points of color against the senators' black garments. The ladies kept still as mice, feeling themselves present there on sufferance ; and, besides, their interest was intense.

Mr. Webster commenced the long-expected speech thus :

“ Mr. President, I wish to speak to-day not as a Northern man, but as an American, a member of the Senate of the United States. It is fortunate that there is Senate of the United States ; a body not yet moved from its propriety, not yet lost to the just sense of its own dignity and its own high responsibilities ; and a body to which the country looks with confidence for wise, moderate, patriotic, and healing counsels. It is not to be denied that we live in the midst of strong agitations, and are surrounded by very considerable dangers to our institutions and Government. The imprisoned winds are let loose. The East, the

West, the North, and the stormy South, all combine to throw the whole ocean into commotion, to toss its billows to the skies, and to disclose its profound depths. I do not affect to regard myself, Mr. President, as holding, or as fit to hold, the helm in this combat of the social elements ; but I have a duty to perform, and I mean to perform it with fidelity—not without a sense of surrounding dangers, but not without hope. I have a part to act, not for my own security or safety, for I am looking out for no fragment upon which to float away from the wreck, if wreck there must be ; but for the good of the whole, and the preservation of the whole ; and there is that which will keep me to my duty during this struggle, whether the sun and the stars shall appear or not appear, for many days. I speak to-day for the preservation of the Union. ‘Hear me for my cause.’ . . .”

While Mr. Webster was speaking and had turned toward the Whig side of the Senate, Mr. Calhoun was again brought in and took his seat. Mr. Webster continued : “An honorable member, whose health does not allow him to be here to-day——”

A SENATOR : “He is here.” (Referring to Mr. Calhoun.)

MR. WEBSTER : “I am very happy to hear he is ; may he long be in health and the en-

joyment of it to serve his country. . . . The Secretary had the boldness and candor to avow in that correspondence that the great object sought by the annexation of Texas was to strengthen the slave interest of the South."

MR. CALHOUN: "The ground I put it on was, that it would make an exposed frontier, and if Great Britain succeeded in her object, it would be impossible that the frontier could be secured against the aggression of the abolitionists, and that the Government was bound, under the guarantees of the Constitution, to protect us under such a state."

MR. WEBSTER: "It was that Texas must be obtained for the security of the slave interest of the South."

MR. CALHOUN: "Another view is distinctly given."

MR. WEBSTER: "But, sir, the honorable member did avow the object himself, openly, boldly, and manfully; he did not disguise his conduct or his motives."

MR. CALHOUN: "Never, sir, never."

Upon Mr. Calhoun's endeavoring to answer Mr. Webster further, he found himself falling and sat down; then Mr. Webster, with a truly grand gesture, stretched out both his arms to Mr. Calhoun with a voice filled with tears, and said:

“ What he means he is very apt to say.” Mr. Calhoun gasped out, “ Always, always.”

There were few dry eyes, as this dying gladiator threw his last breath into the balance for his own people. In a few moments the fitful struggle which had so far sustained him waned, and the whole Senate standing, he was led and partially carried to a carriage and taken to his bed, from which he never rose ; and since that direful day there has been none taken from us, more noble, more honorable, or more eloquent than the perfect patriot, incorruptible citizen, blameless husband, devoted father, humane master, and faithful friend, John C. Calhoun.

His funeral was conducted with the utmost ceremony and pomp that was then observed on the death of a great man of that day. The remains were followed by thousands to the boat, which was to carry them back to his grief-stricken State. The horses (twelve in number) were each led by negro mutes, and martial music and tolling bells made the whole ceremony infinitely sad.

Mr. Davis was one of the committee who went as an escort of honor ; the body lay in state, in Charleston, and he told me that the flowers were so numerous that they hid the bier. The “ Cloth of Gold ” roses were in full bloom and covered every available space

near the departed leader. A continuous stream passed through the hall where he lay, for three days, and until late in the night, to look upon his beloved face once more. When the committee returned home, the usual eulogies were pronounced, and my husband, with faltering voice, delivered an eloquent one. Mr. Webster was much pleased, and came up to congratulate him. The great Senator was fond of poetry, but had no rhythm in his head and no verbal memory, for the same reason; so he shook Mr. Davis warmly by the hand, and said: "That was a fine speech you made, especially that comparison, 'Like a summer-dried fountain when our need was the sorest.'" Mr. Davis laughed and told him "That was the only part of it that was not mine, that was Walter Scott's."

Mr. Webster once quoted from Moore (or meant to do so): "As the sun-flower turned to her God when he sets, the same look which he gave when she rose," and was all unconscious, until the people smiled, that he was wrong.

The so-called compromise, after being the cause of the most intense feeling on both sides, became an occasion of dissension throughout the Southern States. The "peace at any price" wing of the Democratic party held meetings, and the Whigs supplemented

them by others among themselves ; and all talked about nullification, disunion, and everything that had been imagined or launched at Mr. Calhoun's devoted head in the twenty-five years of his unavailing struggle against the encroachment of pseudo-philanthropists, who deprecated our enjoyment of the property, which they would certainly not have sacrificed, had it been in their possession. The State Rights Democrats made "canvasses" everywhere, meeting the malcontents in debate to explain that neither disunion nor nullification was their object, but the concerted insistence upon our rights in the common property of the States ; that our slaves had been recognized as property by the United States and as such they could not, without sacrificing the pride of equality and manhood, allow them to be proscribed where others enjoyed the privilege of taking all species of possessions into the new States or Territories.

The State Rights men saw at a glance that, when these Territories should have been erected into free States, our hopeless minority would appeal in vain to reason and a sense of justice for redress. Majorities are never magnanimous ; their conclusions are seldom just ; and their methods always arbitrary. Our poor Esau, however, did not attain to the



sense of all he was losing until Jacob had secured the inheritance, without even the exchange of a mess of pottage.

In a debate in the Senate, Mr. Davis said—in answer to Mr. Foote's announcement that the people of Mississippi did not agree with him—that he would not remain an hour if he did not believe that he truly represented Mississippi; and though no specific pledge was given, it was an understood thing that the two Mississippi senators were to meet and discuss before the people their different views.

As soon as Congress adjourned, we left Washington, and went down to Jackson, Miss. There we remained a week for Mr. Davis to make preliminary arrangements for the proposed series of debates with Mr. Foote.

General Quitman was one of the nullification-school of which Mr. Calhoun is generally considered the founder, and with which Mr. Davis never in any degree affiliated. In a message to the Legislature of Mississippi, General Quitman had expressed these views, and the people did not feel able to adopt them, but there were peculiar circumstances at the time that rendered the friends of General Quitman, and they were nearly as numerous as the people of Mississippi, unwilling to dis-

appoint him. He had been arrested by the United States authorities on the plea of having been engaged with the Cuban Liberators. It was believed that, had he been sectionally less obnoxious, he would not have been disturbed as the chief magistrate of the State.

The recent election of Mr. Davis to the United States Senate had conferred upon him for six years longer the office which he preferred to all others. He could not, therefore, in engaging in a political campaign in his State, be suspected of desiring a nomination for any other office from the Democratic Convention, the meeting of which was then drawing near.

His devotion to the Union of our fathers had been so often and so publicly declared; he had, on the floor of the Senate, so defiantly challenged any question of his fidelity to it; and his services, civil and military, had now extended through so long a period, and were so generally known, that he felt assured that no whisperings of envy or ill-will could lead the people of Mississippi to believe that he had dishonored their trust, by using the power they had conferred on him to destroy the Government to which he was accredited.

The charges against General Quitman had not been sustained. Many of the Democratic party of Mississippi recognized a consequent

obligation to renominate him for the office of which he had been deprived.

Among these was Mr. Davis, who, in reviewing the exciting contest which followed, subsequently wrote :

“ When the delegates met in party convention, the committee appointed to select candidates, on comparison of opinions, concluded that, in view of the effort to fix upon the party the imputation of a purpose of disunion, some of the antecedents of General Quitman might endanger success. A proposition was therefore made, in the committee on nominations, that I should be invited to become a candidate ; and that, if General Quitman would withdraw, my acceptance of the nomination and the resignation of my place in the United States Senate, which it was known would result, was to be followed by the appointment by the Governor of General Quitman to the vacated place in the Senate. I offered no objection to this arrangement, but left it to General Quitman to decide. He claimed the nomination for the governorship, or nothing, and was so nominated.

“ To promote the success of the Democratic nominees, I engaged actively in the canvass, and continued in the field until stricken down by disease. This occurred just before the election of delegates to a State

Convention, for which provision had been made by the Legislature, and the canvass for which, conducted in the main upon party lines, was in progress simultaneously with that for the ordinary State officers. The Democratic majority in the State when the canvass began was estimated at eight thousand. At this election, in September, for delegates to the State Convention, we were beaten by about seven thousand five hundred votes. Seeing in this result the foreshadowing of almost inevitable defeat, General Quitman withdrew from the canvass as a candidate, and the Executive Committee of the party (empowered to fill vacancies) called on me to take his place. My health did not permit me to leave home at that time, and only about six weeks remained before the election was to take place; but, being assured that I was not expected to take any active part, and that the party asked only the use of my name, I consented to be announced, and immediately resigned from the United States Senate. Nevertheless, I soon afterward took the field in person, and worked earnestly until the day of election. I was defeated; but the majority of more than seven thousand votes, that had been cast a short time before against the party with which I was associated, was reduced to less than one thousand."

The exposure to the sun had its usual effect upon Mr. Davis, and he was stricken down with fever which brought on acute inflammation of his left eye and threatened ulceration of the cornea. Fortune favored him in his being taken ill at the house of kind and self-abnegatory friends, who nursed him with care and skill until he was well enough to reach by easy stages the nearest landing on the river. From thence he came home, a shadow of his former self, and not able to bear a ray of light upon either eye. For three weeks he slept all day, arose after sundown, and walked through the house all night. During this time I found out with how many compensating powers nature has endowed us. In light that was not sufficient to show the position of the furniture, I could write, and even read large print. As Mr. Davis could not see at all, the committee who were charged with the conduct of the canvass had a draft of an address made and sent to him for signature. At first he listened and corrected a phrase or two, but when a turgid appeal to the voters was read he put forth his hand, holding my pen, and said, "Oh, let me get at that," and drew the pen through the offending words. He discarded the whole paper, and, to his dictation, I wrote another. When the address reached Jackson his friends were in a state of

great triumph over the idea of his recovery, and large bets were made that the paper had been transcribed by his own hand. However it was three weeks afterward before the sufferer could bear the light.

During this period General Quitman came to visit us, and I was most agreeably impressed with his remarks on his defeat. There was no bitterness, but rather an intense desire, if he could not be elected, that another not holding his peculiar dogmas might meet with entire success. He remarked, "I carry my State rights views to the citadel; you stop at the outworks." Still weak, with the eye most affected tied up, and wearing goggle-glasses, Mr. Davis left home to begin his canvass three weeks before the election. In the eastern counties of the State his opponents had caused a notice of his death to be published, and in many precincts his friends did not go to the polls in consequence of the rumor; yet the result stated by Mr. Davis was attained.

The following letter, kindly furnished to me by Mr. James A. Pearce, of Kent County, Md., will explain Mr. Davis's views after he resigned his position in the Senate, which was nearly a full term of six years.

Copy of letter from Mr. Davis to James Alfred Pearce, M.D., in which he refers to his position in the session of 1850:

“ P. O. PALMYRA, MISS., August 22, 1852.

“ MY DEAR SIR: Among the most pleasing reminiscences of my connection with the Senate I place my association with you, and first among the consolations for the train of events which led to my separation from that body, I remember your very kind letter.

“ When it was received, I was unable, on account of ophthalmic disease, to write, and delayed answering until I could dispense with an amanuensis; why I delayed longer I cannot satisfactorily say, but with entire certainty can say it was not because I did not feel the friendship, the delicacy, and the generosity which dictated your letter; it was not because I did not desire to hear from you often, and be kindly remembered by you. If I know myself, you do me justice in supposing my efforts in the session of 1850 were directed to the maintenance of our constitutional rights as members of the Union, and that I did not sympathize with those who desired the dissolution of the Union. After my return to Mississippi in 1851, I took ground against the policy of secession, and drew the resolution, adopted by the democratic *State Rights* convention of June, 1851, which declared that secession was the last alternative, the final remedy, and should not be resorted to under

existing circumstances. I thought the State should solemnly set the seal of her disapprobation on some of the measures of the 'Compromise.'

"When a member of the U. S. Senate, I opposed them because I thought them wrong and of dangerous tendency, and also because the people in every form, and the legislature by resolutions of instructions, required me to oppose them. But indiscreet men went too fast and too far ; the public became alarmed ; and the reaction corresponded with the action, extreme in both instances. The most curious and suggestive feature in the case is the fact that those who were originally foremost in the movement were the beneficiaries of the reaction.

"Having, by their extreme course, created apprehension, they cried most lustily that the Union was in danger, and saved by their exertion the officers of the State and some of the Federal Government.

"I thank you for the hope you express of my speedy return to the Senate ; I believe that the people of the State, if another election occurs before a choice of a senator, will so decree ; but the present legislature has been called to meet in extraordinary session, and the members having been elected under extraordinary circumstances, no calculation as to



their course on this subject can be made by ordinary rules.

“I believe that Emory\* will lose no reputation by his triumph over the favoritism of the Top. Eng. Bureau, but the Government cannot now gain all which his knowledge of the particular subject would have secured to us, if he had been continued to the position of Astronomer.

“I am as ever truly your friend,

“JEFFERSON DAVIS.

“JAMES ALFRED PEARCE,

“U. S. Senator, D. C.”

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\* Afterward General W. H. Emory, of the United States Army.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### FROM PLANTATION TO CABINET LIFE.

AFTER the canvass resulted against the Democratic party, we began to put our home in order; for, on our return, after a long absence, the little woman who had charge of the house told me, with friendly sympathy, "Missis, 'tain't no use to talk; what isn't broke is crack, and what isn't crack is broke." So, finding we had met the usual fate of absentees, we began to rehabilitate our home and grounds as best we might. My husband was very fond of cultivating trees and of seeing roses and ornamental shrubs blooming about us. We worked together in the garden the greater part of the day, and whenever he thought of it he laughed over one of our two gardeners sending an order for seeds to New Orleans, with the endorsement upon the outside of the letter: "Please send these seeds immediately, if not sooner. John O'Connor, Gardener."

The crudities of this class of people entertained him very much; indeed, with our

**MR. DAVIS' BRIARFIELD RESIDENCE.**



books, our mail twice a week, the garden, the humors of the cultivators thereof, occasional visits from neighbors, and the daily ride on our fast racing horses, with races on the smooth road wherever we found one, we were very happy. There was thirty seconds' difference in the speed of our horses, our races were rather even, and we enjoyed the exercise exceedingly. Nothing could be more pleasant than the dense shade through which we could ride for miles, in air redolent of the perfume of the moss, flowers, wild crab-apple and plum blossoms.

Sometimes a calf was missing, and then my husband went to hunt the alligator that had probably taken it. Once he had a very remarkable success in punishing one that had killed two calves. The negroes found its hole, and Mr. Davis put a long cane down it until the creature seized it in its mouth. He then put the gun on a line with the cane and shot the alligator in the mouth. He was an immense animal, and a post-mortem examination justified the killing, for the last calf was found in part.

The land is so fertile at Brierfield and in the adjacent country that golden-rod grows large enough for a strong walking-stick, and the heads of the bloom are like banks of gold on the sides of the road. In every slough

the lotos covers the surface with its lemon-colored chalices, and the green leaves are nearly a foot across. We planted a little switch, or scion of live-oak, with an attenuated little root, in 1852, and now it shades ninety feet in all directions, and is over six feet in circumference. "Possession crowns endeavor" there, and that quickly.

In the midst of these pursuits, while daily congratulating ourselves on being at home, there to remain quietly, with our hearts filled by the joy of possessing our first child, a son, born June 30, 1853, and called after Mr. Davis's father, Samuel Emory Davis, Mr. Pierce wrote, urging my husband to enter his Cabinet. My entreaties, added to Mr. Davis's unwillingness to embark again in a political life, induced him to decline; but upon Mr. Pierce urging him to go, if only for the inauguration, he felt he could not refuse, but went on alone. He has told this part of his life better than another could.

"Happy in the peaceful pursuits of a planter," wrote Mr. Davis, in his later years, "busily engaged in cares for servants, in the improvement of my land, in building, in rearing live stock, and the like occupations, the time passed pleasantly away until my retirement was interrupted by an invitation to take a place in the Cabinet of Mr. Pierce, who had

been elected to the Presidency of the United States in November, 1852.

“Although warmly attached to Mr. Pierce personally, and entertaining the highest estimate of his character and political principles, private and personal reasons led me to decline the offer.

“This was followed by an invitation to attend the ceremony of inauguration, which took place March 4, 1853. While in Washington, on this visit, I was induced by public considerations to reconsider my determination, and accept the office of Secretary of War. The public record of that period will best show how the duties of that office were performed.”

I proceeded on a round of visits to our family, to show the baby to our kinsfolks, hoping soon to be at home again and dwell in happy obscurity. My husband was, however, over-persuaded by his friends, and again our home was left, but this time for many years, to the care of hirelings. James Pemberton was dead, and we were reduced to the necessity of having an overseer. To be a good overseer requires as much talent for governing men as is needful for the general of an army—divine patience and ceaseless vigilance and industry, utter self-abnegation and an inflexible will. Need I say there are

few good ones, and if there should be one, his ability and natural gifts remove him very soon from that sphere.

The negroes are very shrewd in their classification of men, and the best judges of a gentleman that I have seen. They weigh the character of men set over them warily, and act upon their verdict very promptly. I sent a little negro girl, about nine years old, to attend on the quite lady-like wife of one of our overseers. Rosina came back in a few days and announced her flight "from service or labor." I interrogated her about her sudden retirement. She said: "Missis she all very well, but 'tis nottin' but ribbons—she don't know nottin', and she is a regular half-strainer" (a pretentious person), "and dey jest sets down like we niggers 'dout washin' dey hans and eats same like hosses." After some time I found out that she had been "called outen" her name—Rose, instead of Rosina.

One of the overseers told me one day, in Mr. Davis's absence, that one of the men had drawn a large knife on him, and I had better stay in the house. I went out at once to interview the negro, and found him in the kitchen with a great plate of greens and pork in his lap. He rose with a smiling good-morning, and when I asked what possessed him to draw a



knife on the overseer, he roared out laughing, and pulled an immense knife-handle out of his pocket, without a single blade. He said, "I skeered him good—I jes' showed him the handle. Now does you speck us ter b'lieve in them poor white trash when we people has master that fit and whipped everybody?"

We did the best we could in the matter of a care-taker for our negroes and of our interests, but every year marked a decrease in our income. Mr. Davis insisted on one point, and always carried it, viz., that the negroes should not be whipped, and that they should be kept healthy and satisfied, even if they made little crops. They took advantage of his care, and not being stimulated by affection made no exertion; but they were very affectionate to us, and felt proud of a good crop, if their industry proved strong enough to make one.

When our first child was born every negro on the plantation, great and small, came up with little gifts of eggs and chickens and a speech of thanks for the birth of a "little massa to take care of we, and be good to we," from the year-old, open-mouthed, glossy little tot, with an egg in his fist, to the old women with a squawking hen, or a dozen large yam potatoes in their aprons. The men looked lovingly on, at a distance, but

the women each took a kiss. One lifted up the little rosy fingers, and said, "De Lord, honey, you ain't never gwine work—your negroes gwine do all dat for you." And her words in part came true, for in infancy our boy received his inheritance and needs nothing now.

The truly generous temper of my husband was best exhibited toward his inferiors. Generally patient, he was always just. He literally suffered "long and was kind" to all who depended on him. To the last hour of his life the soldiers who had served under him in the regular army, as well as those who were with him in Mexico, wrote to him letters of affectionate remembrance that gave him a world of comfort.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### FIRST YEAR IN THE CABINET.

MR. DAVIS'S first report as Secretary of War was transmitted to Congress on December 1, 1853. Like all his public documents, it was marked by a lucidity and dignity of style which not only invested the dead facts with living interest, but added an irresistible force to his arguments and recommendations.

The report showed that, during the preceding year, the War Department, with an army the actual strength of which was only a little over 10,000 men, actively and constantly employed, had been unusually successful in protecting the inhabitants of the frontier; that Indian depredations had been infrequent; that new posts were being established, west of the Mississippi, for the protection of emigration across the plains; that in Texas, Indian hostilities had diminished both in frequency and importance; that permanent positions on the Rio Grande, the boundary between Mexico and the United States, had been strengthened, especially a strong post opposite El Paso; that it was in

contemplation to establish a large post at the point where the great trail of the Comanches crossed the Rio Grande ; that other dispositions for the control of the Indian in Northern Texas were in progress, so as to entirely prevent Indian depredations. As small posts had been proven to be injurious to discipline, instruction, and efficiency, and to invite aggression, it was the intention of the Department to post troops, in large bodies, at commanding positions among the Indians, and to restrain aggression by the exhibition of a power adequate to punish. "The Indians will not be likely to engage in hostilities if their families are in the power of the troops in their absence."

He urged that armament for the most important points in Texas and the Pacific coast should be forwarded at the earliest practicable period, and that there should also be sent to the Pacific coast, and stored at suitable points, the ordnance and ordnance stores needed for its defence, and to the arsenals on the Columbia River, and on the Bay of San Francisco, the machinery and other means needed for the construction, equipment, and repair of the *materiel* of war. He recommended that depots should be formed of such other supplies as are not perishable in their character. "With a water

transportation of sixteen thousand miles, and land routes impracticable for the transportation of heavy supplies, it will be too late to adopt these measures when the communication by sea is liable to interruption ; and no prudent nation should trust, in matters of such vital importance, to the chances of a future that no human sagacity can foresee."

The Secretary next recommended a reform suggested by the statistics of the recruiting service. Recruiting had been unsuccessful during the preceding year, owing to the great demand for labor. Four thousand six hundred recruits were required for the next year, and at the current rates of pay it was not expected to obtain them. He showed that from 1826 to the opening of the war with Mexico, the average excess of the legal over the actual strength of the army was eighteen per cent. of the latter ; that the average actual loss by desertions had been twelve and three-fourths per cent. ; by discharges from disabilities and other causes, seven per cent. ; by death, only four per cent., so that the actual loss, independent of discharges by expiration of service, had been twenty-three and three-fourths per cent. of the actual strength of the army. Since the close of the war with Mexico the excess of the legal over the actual strength of the army

had been nineteen per cent., and the average losses from all causes twenty-eight per cent. Desertions gave sixteen per cent. ; but a part of the percentage of the desertions was due to the excitement on account of the discovery of gold in California—the excess from that cause, in one year alone, being fifty-three per cent. over the average of the three succeeding years.

An analysis of the desertions from 1826 to 1846 shows that there was a gradual diminution in the proportion of desertions as the condition of the soldier was ameliorated by increase of pay, etc. ; and that when the difference between the pay of the soldier and the value of the corresponding class of labor in civil life was slight, desertions were comparatively infrequent, being, at two different periods, only seven and one-half and four and one-half per cent. of the actual strength of the army, and that they were increased in a direct ratio with the increasing prosperity of the country ; reaching, where the disproportion was greatest, twenty-one per cent. The same causes influenced the number of re-enlistments—the proportion, during the last four years, being only seventeen per cent., while, in the three years before the war with Mexico it was twenty-five per cent. of the number of discharges by the expiration of service.

These results being traceable to the disparity between the pay of the soldier and the value of labor in civil life, and the fact that length of service carried with it no reward, either in increased pay, rank, or privilege, the Secretary recommended an increase of the existing pay; an additional increase for each successive period of five years, so long as the soldier shall remain in the army; and provision for the promotion to the lowest grade of commissioned officers for such of the non-commissioned officers of the army as might be found qualified for, and by their conduct, character, and services entitled to such advancement.

“It has been the policy of our Government,” argued the Secretary, “to maintain only a small army in peace; but it should also be our policy to be prepared for the event of war by making that army as effective as possible—efficient not only in the operations required of it in the field of battle, but in the various duties of a campaign, including economy of life and health; and in its capacity of disseminating instruction and discipline among those whom the emergencies of war call into the field unprepared to meet its hardships and ignorant of the means of guarding against its vicissitudes. In the operations of war efficiency and economy, if

not synonymous, are, at least, correlative terms; and the army which is the most efficient will at the same time be the most economical.

“To attain this efficiency it is essential that the *personnel* of the army should be intelligent and capable; but it is idle to hope that men of this character can be obtained unless their pay bears a fair proportion to that which they would receive in the corresponding employments of civil life. Patriotism, or a sense of duty, will not, in time of peace, fill the ranks of an army; nor will pay alone be sufficient to develop all the elements of efficiency. The hope of advancement is the foundation of professional zeal and success, and this incentive should exist in the army as well as in civil life. Its honors and distinctions should be open to all.”

The Secretary also urgently recommended that there should be added to the existing military establishment two regiments of riflemen and one regiment of dragoons, and an additional company of sappers and miners. He furthermore advocated an extension of the pension system to the widows and orphans of officers and soldiers of the regular army; the creation of a retired list for disabled and superannuated officers; the increase of the pay of officers, which no longer bore the same



relation to the value of money that it bore when the compensation was fixed ; for the increase of the comforts of troops in barracks ; and for the distribution of United States arms to the several States according to Congressional representation instead of in proportion to the number of militia in each. He drew attention to the need of supply of the militia of the country with the proper books of tactical instruction, and recommended that an annual appropriation of \$20,000 for a few years should be made for the purpose. He recommended the increase of the academic term at the Military Academy at West Point to five years, and again called attention to the exposed and defenceless condition of the Pacific coast.

The Secretary also recommended that power be given the President to attach non-commissioned officers who distinguished themselves in the war with Mexico, by brevet of the lowest rank, to any company, and to bestow certificates of merit upon soldiers who were in like manner distinguished ; also to grant certificates of merit to distinguished non-commissioned officers who were not considered eligible for the position of commissioned officers.

He also made a full and lucid statement of the explorations that had been made, and

were making, in order to ascertain the most practicable and economical route for a railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, describing the character of the country and the difficulties to be overcome. Copies of the instructions given to the explorers of the War Department were appended to the report. From these it appears that the officers were directed to observe and note all the objects and phenomena that had an immediate or might have a remote bearing upon the railroad, or which might serve to develop the resources and make known the peculiarities and climate of the country. For this purpose they were supplied with full sets of instruments for determining the latitude and longitude of places, the courses and distances of the routes, and the topography of the country on either side within accessible distances; with the means of ascertaining the variation of atmospheric pressure, and other meteorological phenomena. Two of the parties were supplied with instruments to determine the force and direction of the magnetic current. They were instructed to observe the prevailing direction of the wind, the amount of rain, the degree of temperature, and the humidity of the atmosphere. They were also required to report on the geology of the country, to gather specimens of differ-

ent rocks and soils, to make collection of plants and animals, and to collect statistics of the Indian tribes found in the regions traversed. The information to be derived from this series of observations were expected to be of much value in establishing the capacity of the country to sustain population and furnish articles of commerce. The astronomical observations were indispensable to fix the geographical position of the principal points of the route, and for improving the map of our Western possessions. The magnetic observations were of importance in accurately tracing the line between the points determined by astronomical observations. It is well known that the magnetic needle has an irregular and sometimes fitful variation, amounting to a difference of eighteen degrees between Washington City and the Western coast of Oregon, and the law by which this variation is increased or diminished had not yet been ascertained.

The meteorology of the country has a direct bearing on the question of the construction of a railway. The probable amount of snow should be ascertained and this depends on the temperature and humidity of the place. It was therefore deemed proper that the hygrometrical state of the atmosphere should be measured by suitable instruments,

and the mean temperature ascertained by thermometrical observations of the soil at a few feet below the surface.

A knowledge of the geology of the country was important, as affording essential data relative to the construction and use of the railway.

Observations as to the zoölogy and botany of the country were ordered to be made, as indicative of the capacity of the country to sustain and furnish materials for construction.

Thus, with an educated prevision, was every essential fact sought that might be useful in determining the best route for the great national enterprise projected.

In considering the dangers to which the Pacific coast would be subjected in case of a war with a maritime power, the Secretary stated that the projected railroad would but partially remove the difficulty of sending across the continent the troops, munitions, and provisions that in such an emergency would be required, and he recommended the introduction of a sufficient number of camels and dromedaries for expresses and reconnaissance, and for transporting troops rapidly across the desert.

Under Mr. Davis's energetic direction the pending works of harbor and river improve-

ments made satisfactory progress during this his first year in the department.

In obedience to a law directing the Secretary of War to report to Congress whether, in his opinion, it would not be more economical, proper, and advisable to cause all the arms of the United States to be made by contracts, Mr. Davis declared it essential that the army should be under the control of the War Department, and advantageous, if not necessary, that such establishments should exist under the charge of competent and experienced officers of the army, to the end that a uniformity may be obtained and all the improvements and efficiency secured which professional zeal and skill would seek and produce—a decision approved by all experts who considered solely the interest of the Government, but *not* acceptable to the lobbyists and manufacturing corporations who are usually so unanimous in declaring that the Government should undertake nothing that “private enterprise” can accomplish. Mr. Davis elaborately gave the reasons for his decision, nor have they been controverted nor has the policy been reversed to this day.

Mr. Davis went further, and as heavy guns and cannon had never been made by the Government, but by contract, in consequence of the failure of Congress to make

a provision for a national foundry, took this occasion to recommend an appropriation for that purpose. He also showed the need and urged the establishment of a national armory on the Western waters, and the removal of one of the two existing armories of the East. This action, as well as every act of Mr. Davis's administration of the War Department, show how baseless was the slander asserting that years before the outbreak of the war between the States, Southern statesmen, when in office, prepared the way for it by strengthening the South in its military works at the expense of the North and West. No single act of Mr. Davis in office shows the faintest trace of any desire to take advantage of the power entrusted to him for any sectional aggrandizement. Representing in his office the entire Union of States, he was equally mindful and watchful of the interests and rights of every section of it.

Under the supervision of the War Department, also during this first year of Mr. Davis's administration, the work for the extension of the capitol was energetically prosecuted, under the special charge of Captain M. C. Meigs, of the Corps of Engineers, detailed by the Secretary for the purpose.

The War Department was also intrusted with the work of bringing an adequate supply

**CABIN JOHN BRIDGE, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**





of water into the city of Washington. It was necessary to bring this supply from the great Falls of the Potomac through a conduit nine feet in diameter. The work was energetically prosecuted, and when finished was found capable of delivering nearly seventy million gallons of water, at an elevation of fourteen feet above the upper floor of the Capitol.\*

Mr. Davis recommended the erection of a fire-proof building adequate to the needs of the War Department ; but this work was not undertaken until after the inauguration of the war against the Southern States.

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\* A splendid stone aqueduct, a few miles from Washington, built during Mr. Davis's term as Secretary of War, still remains a monument to his earnest labors for the benefit of the Capitol. It is known as "Cabin John Bridge," it has a span of 220 feet, and is the longest in the world.

During the war between the States his name, deeply cut in the solid granite blocks, was, either by the order of Secretary of War Stanton, or the Secretary of the Interior, Caleb B. Smith, erased.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### MR. DAVIS'S SECOND REPORT.

MR. DAVIS opened his second report as Secretary of War (presented to Congress December 4, 1854), with the gratifying announcement that the difference between the authorized and actual strength of the army was fast disappearing under the operation of the law (passed at his urgent recommendation in August) "to increase the pay of the rank and file of the army and to encourage enlistments." The actual strength was 10,745, against an authorized strength of 14,216.

After tersely describing the distribution of the force, he proceeded to report the military operations of the past year. The Seminole Indians still occupied Southern Florida, owing to the failure of all efforts by the Interior Department to dislodge them, but active measures had been taken to reduce them. By opening roads, by the use of boats adapted to the navigation of the lakes, swamps, and bayous, which had hitherto enabled the Indians to elude pursuit, the Department was acquiring an accurate knowledge of the coun-

try, and by cutting off their trade was inspiring the Indians with a conviction of their inability to escape from, or resist the power of, the United States.

In other departments there had been repeated collisions between Indians and our troops—in Texas (with the Sioux), in New Mexico, on the Pacific coast, and on the Plains, showing the insufficiency of small posts, the deplorable inadequacy of our military force, and the absolute necessity of the increase which the Secretary had urgently recommended in his first report.

Presenting the statistics of the five military departments into which the territory of the United States was divided, the Secretary showed the inadequacy of the standing army, never exceeding 11,000 men, to protect a seaboard and foreign frontier of more than 10,000 miles, an Indian frontier and routes through the Indian country of more than 8,000 miles, and an Indian population of more than 400,000, of whom, probably one-half, or 40,000 warriors, are inimical, and only wait the opportunity to become active enemies.\*

Again the Secretary urged an increase of

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\* During this year Lieutenant Gunnison, who was sent with an expedition across to Salt Lake, was waylaid by the Indians and murdered. His young wife recovered his mutilated remains. He was a brilliant officer.

the small regular army. The progress of settlement involved a possibility of further collisions with the Indians; for, as our population pressed westward from the Missouri, it forced the savage tribes into narrower limits and an unproductive region, which not only enabled bands hitherto separate to combine for war, but provoked it by diminishing their ability to live by the precarious products of the chase. Recent experience of Indian war showed that an increase in our army would be a measure of economy. The cost of the war with the Sac and Fox Indians, in 1832, amounted to more than three millions of dollars; the definite appropriations for the suppression of Indian hostilities, from 1836 to 1841, inclusive, amounted to more than eighteen millions of dollars. Within the last few years large appropriations had been made for the same object in Texas, New Mexico, Utah, California, and Oregon. The aggregate of such appropriations for the last twenty-two years, independent of the regular army, was estimated at more than thirty millions of dollars, a sum sufficient to have maintained, during the whole period, the adequate military force asked for in his first report. This vast sum, also, was independent of the expenditure for property destroyed, compensation to the suffering inhabitants, and did

not include the destruction of private property, nor the losses consequent upon the interruption of agriculture and of the progress of settlement. If, in 1831, a small mounted force had been at the disposal of the War Department, the Black Hawk war might have been prevented; in 1836, if a few additional companies had been sent to Florida, the Seminole war would not have occurred.

The Secretary again earnestly urged the justice of increase in the compensation of the officers of the army, whose pay had been fixed more than forty years before, when money had a much higher value as measured by the price of food. He also advocated the proposal of additional legislation which should place the widows and orphans of the officers and soldiers of the army on an equality with the officers and soldiers of the navy.

In urging the increase of the army the Secretary wrote :

“The Secretary is authorized to call out the militia to repel invasion and suppress insurrection. These are the emergencies for which it was deemed proper to confer upon the Executive the power to call citizens from their homes and ordinary avocations, and these are the great occasions on which they may be justly expected to make all the personal sacrifices which the safety of their country may

require. It is in this view that we habitually and securely look to the militia as our reliance for national defence. It was not the design of the Constitution and laws to enable the President to raise and maintain a standing army, and yet this would be the practical effect of a power at his discretion to call out the militia into service and employ them for the ordinary duty of preserving order in the Indian Territory. The abuse to which such a power, if it were possessed, would be subject sufficiently attests the wisdom of our forefathers in not conferring it, and must remove far from us any desire to possess it. If this view of the subject be correct, it follows that the Executive must look to the army, properly authorized by law to preserve peace among the Indian tribes, and to give that protection to pioneer settlements which interest, humanity, and duty alike demand."

He made a strong argument for a needed revision of our military legislation in regard to rank and command, as well as to organization, showing a thorough knowledge of the subject and a masterful grasp of the needs of the army as well as of the organization of the armies of Europe. As the suggestions for reform and the arguments in their favor would interest to-day only military students, I must content myself with a refer-

ence to the original report (Report of the Secretary of War, 2d Session, 33d Congress, Ex. Doc., No. 1, 1854). He called the attention of Congress to the condition of coast defences, to the needs of material modifications in the armament of troops owing to recent inventions, and reported the results of his inquiries into the systems used by the light troops of other countries; urged further legislation for the sale of useless military sites, a reform in the methods of sales of military reservations to prevent combinations among bidders against the interest of the Government; various improvements in the system of distributing military funds, and the progress of various public undertakings intrusted to the War Department, among them roads in the course of construction in Minnesota, the survey of the northern and north-western lakes, the explorations and surveys for a transcontinental railroad, an exploration of the plains of Los Angeles and the waters of the bay of San Francisco, and to determine where there was a practical route for a railroad through the mountain passes of the Sierra Nevada and Coast range, which extend from the sea-coast to Point Conception, and the works connected with the Capitol extension and the water supply of Washington City.

As in his first report, every operation or need of the army and of the War Department was presented with a lucidity of style and statement that made his official communications models of what State papers should be, and necessarily increased his reputation as a far-seeing and able Minister.

His care extended to the utmost parts of the United States. General George W. Jones, of Dubuque, Ia., says :

“ In 1853 or 1854, while I was in the Senate of the United States, Colonel Long of the Engineer Corps came to Dubuque to inspect the improvement of the harbor, under an appropriation I had procured.

“ He was applied to by Mr. Charles Gregoire, my wife's brother, for a change in its construction.

“ He declined to make the change asked for, but advised Mr. Gregoire to get me to ask the Secretary of War, Mr. Davis, to authorize the change in the survey.

“ Before I left home Mr. Gregoire came to me, and submitted to me the plans and maps of the harbor improvement. I took them with me, and showed them to Secretary Davis, who at once consented to the change, and hence is the city of Dubuque indebted to that Secretary for the present superior ice harbor, the very best on the river, anywhere



between St. Paul and New Orleans, that I know of."

The fortifications of Portland harbor perplexed him greatly, on account of the difficulty of finding a secure and permanent foundation for the forts.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THIRD YEAR AS SECRETARY OF WAR.

MR. DAVIS'S third report was presented to the House of Representatives December 3, 1855.

The army consisted of 15,752 officers and men—only 2,115 less than the authorized strength—and enlistments were progressing so satisfactorily that the difference was rapidly being overcome. This was the result of the measures formerly recommended by Mr. Davis. Over 10,000 men had enlisted during the year, and over 20,000 had been refused on account of minority or unfitness. Four additional regiments had been recruited and organized.

The removal of the Seminole Indians from Florida was making satisfactory progress.

During the year Indian hostilities in the West, Texas, New Mexico, and the Pacific, had been of frequent occurrence. The Sioux had been chastised in Kansas and Nebraska, and the Indians in Texas guilty of outrages upon frontier inhabitants and emigrants had been summarily punished by the troops sent

against them. At the date of the report news had just reached the Department of the outbreak of Indian hostilities in Oregon and the Territory of Washington.

The Secretary again renewed, and with increased emphasis, his former recommendations for a revision of the laws regulating rank and command, and for a reorganization of the army, so that "the right of command should follow rank by one certain and determinate rule; that officers who hold commissions which entitle them to the command of troops should not, at an early period of the service, be placed permanently in positions on the staff which afford no opportunity for increasing military knowledge or confirming military habits; that troops organized, equipped, and necessarily employed for the same service should not be divided into different arms; that those serving on foot with regimental organizations, or bearing muskets or rifles, should not be divided into infantry and artillery, nor mounted men armed and equipped alike be divided into dragoons and cavalry; that engineers should not be divided into two corps, with a nominal distinction of engineers and topographical-engineers, though their acquirements, capabilities, and duties are so entirely alike that it has been found necessary to adopt an arbitrary rule assigning to each a part of

the duties of both." "These propositions," added the Secretary, "appear too clear to me to need to be enforced by argument, and I hope that the evils which the bare statement of the facts expose will not be suffered to exist after the subject shall have secured the considerate attention of Congress."

The Secretary also renewed his previous recommendations of a measure for retiring from active service those officers no longer capable of fulfilling its requirements, and for an increase of the compensation of officers in active service, and of the soldiers who by the military signification of certain words used in the statute of August 4, 1854, had been excluded, unintentionally, from the benefits of that act. He recommended an increase of the medical corps and other reforms demanded by the good of the service.

He recommended the establishment at the Military Academy of a Professorship of Ethics and English Studies; for the appointment of an instructor of cavalry, and for the allowance of light cavalry pay to the instructor of artillery.

He called attention to, and recommended the fortifying of the entrance of the Columbia River.

He made another important recommendation which was adopted: "My attention has recent-

ly been called to the practice, in the settlement of accounts at the Treasury, of charging sums due in past years to the current appropriations. It is deemed preferable that the settlement of old accounts should be provided for by appropriations for arrearages, and that the practice above referred to be checked, since, so long as it prevails, the appropriations for current expenses must prove insufficient, and deficiency bills be necessarily the consequence."

The report showed that during the year the manufacture of smooth-bore arms had been stopped ; that new models of all small arms had been adopted upon a rifle principle ; that many samples of breech-loading rifles had been placed in the hands of the troops for trial in the field, a test deemed necessary before adopting any as a standard weapon ; that arms had been distributed to the militia of the States, as prescribed by the law of 1855 ; that arrangements had been made to convert arms of the old model used by the States into rifled arms of the new model ; that the work upon the military roads in Minnesota had made satisfactory progress ; that the survey of the Northwestern lakes had been prosecuted with skill and energy ; that the reports of the officers employed to ascertain the most practicable and economical route for a transcontinental railroad had re-

ported in favor of the route of the thirty-second parallel.

In forwarding the reports of the exploring expeditions the Secretary thus tersely stated the need of a transcontinental railroad for the defence of the Pacific coast in case of war with a maritime power :

“ The facts developed by these surveys, added to other information which we possess, suggest some considerations of great interest with regard to our territory on the Pacific. They exhibit it as a narrow strip of an average width of one hundred and fifty miles of cultivated land, skirting the ocean for a distance of one thousand miles ; rich in those mineral productions which are tempting even beyond their value, and which would be most readily turned to the use of an invader ; drained by two rivers of widespread branches, and with seaports lying so directly upon the ocean that a hostile fleet could commence an attack upon any one of them within a few hours of being descried from land ; or, if fortified against attack, so few in number that comparatively few ships would suffice to blockade them.

“ This territory is not more remote from the principal European states than from those parts of our country whence it would derive its military supplies, and some of those states

have colonies on the Pacific coast, which would greatly facilitate their operations against it. With these advantages, and with those which the attacking force always has of choice of place and time, an enemy possessing a considerable military marine could, with comparatively little cost to himself, subject us to enormous expense in giving to our Pacific frontier the protection which it is the duty of the General Government to afford.

“In the first year of a war with any great maritime power, the communication by sea could not be relied upon for the transportation of supplies from the Atlantic to the Pacific States. Our naval peace establishment would not furnish adequate convoys for the number of store-ships which it would be necessary to employ, and steamships alone, laden with supplies, could not undertake a voyage of twenty thousand miles, passing numerous neutral ports where an enemy's armed vessels, even of the smallest size, might lie in wait to intercept them.

“The only line of communication, then, would be overland; and by this it would be impracticable, with any means heretofore used, to furnish the amount of supplies required for the defence of the Pacific frontier. At the present prices, over the best part of this

route the expense of land transportation alone for the annual supplies of provisions, clothing, camp equipage, and ammunition for such an army as it would be necessary to maintain there would exceed \$20,000,000, and to sustain troops and carry on offensive operations under those circumstances, the expense per man would be six times greater than it is now; the land transportation for each field twelve-pounder, with a due supply of ammunition for one year, would cost \$2,500; of each twenty-four pounder and ammunition, \$9,000; and of a sea-coast gun and ammunition, \$12,000. The transportation of ammunition for a year for one thousand sea-coast guns would cost \$10,000,000. But the expense of transportation would be vastly increased by a war; and at the rates that were paid on the Northern frontier during the last war with Great Britain, the above estimates would be trebled. The time required for the overland journey would be from four to six months. In point of fact, however, supplies for such an army could not be transported across the continent. On the arid and barren belts to be crossed, the limited quantities of water and grass would soon be exhausted by the numerous draught animals required by heavy trains; and for such distance forage could not be carried for their sustenance.



“ On the other hand, the enemy would send out his supplies at from one-seventh to one-twentieth the above rates, and in less time—perhaps in one-fourth the time—if he could get command of the Isthmus routes.

“ Any reliance, therefore, upon furnishing that part of our frontier with means of defence from the Atlantic and interior States, after the commencement of hostilities, would be in vain, and the next resource would be to accumulate there such amount of supplies and stores as would suffice during the continuance of the contest, or until we could obtain command of the sea. Assigning but a moderate limit to this period the expense would yet be enormous, the fortifications, depots, and storehouses would necessarily be on the largest scale, and the cost of placing supplies there for five years would amount to nearly one hundred millions of dollars.

“ In many respects the cost during peace would be equivalent to that during the war. The perishable character of many articles would render it impossible to put provisions in depot for such a length of time ; or in any case there would be deterioration amounting to some millions of dollars per year.

“ These considerations, and others of a strictly military character, cause the Department to examine with interest all projects

promising the accomplishment of railroad communication between the navigable waters of the Mississippi and those of the Pacific Ocean. As military operations depend in a greater degree upon the rapidity and certainty of movement than upon any other circumstance, the introduction of railway transportation has greatly improved the means of defending our Atlantic and inland frontiers ; and to give us a sense of security from attack upon the most exposed portion of our territory, it is requisite that the facility of railroad transportation should be extended to the Pacific coast. Were such a road completed our Pacific coast, instead of being farther removed in time, and less accessible to us than to an enemy, would be brought within a few days of easy communication, and the cost of supplying an army there, instead of being many times greater to us than to him, would be about equal. We would be released from the necessity of accumulating large supplies on that coast, to waste, perhaps, through long years of peace ; and we could feel entire confidence that, let war come, when and with whom it may, before a hostile expedition could reach that exposed frontier an ample force could be placed there to repel any attempt at foreign invasion."

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### FOURTH REPORT.

MR. DAVIS'S fourth annual report was presented to Congress December 1, 1856.

The actual strength of the army was 15,562. During the year an expedition had been sent to the Indian districts of Minnesota; the Indian difficulties on the Plains had ended, except with the Cheyennes; in Texas and New Mexico Indian outbreaks had been unfrequent, but in Florida the efforts of the Department had been unavailing to effect the removal of the Seminole Indians. General Harney had been sent with a force to protect the citizens of Florida from their ravages.

The Secretary recommended a revision of the policy of locating small military posts in advance of settlement, now that civilization had passed the line of general fertility.

"Assuming," he wrote, "that the limits of the fertile regions have been sufficiently well ascertained, and that future operations should be made to conform to the character of the country, the true interests of the public service would seem to suggest that instead of dis-

persing the troops, to form small garrisons at numerous posts where they exhibit weakness to a savage foe. Within the fertile regions a few points accessible by steam-boats or by railways should be maintained, from which strong detachments should annually be sent out into the Indian country during the season when the grass will suffice for the support of the cavalry horses and beasts of draught and burden. These detachments would be available both to hunt and chastise those tribes who had committed depredations, or by passing along the main routes to California, and Oregon and Washington Territories, give the needful protection to emigrants during the season of their transit. Experience has shown that small posts are nearly powerless beyond their own limits. Some of the most flagrant depredations on parties in the vicinity of such military posts, and their inability to pursue and punish the offenders, has tended to bring into disrepute the power and energy of the United States, whose citizens were the victims of predatory attacks. Indeed it is quite supposable that these posts, being fixed points in the routes of the emigrants, afford the Indians the opportunity of observing each train which passes, and thus enable them to determine upon future operations." Again, with increased and impressive emphasis, the

Secretary renewed his plea for increased pay of the army.

“More than the usual number of resignations within the past year give evidence of a defective organization, of a policy injurious to professional pride, and of the necessity of increased compensation. While the hard service and frontier stations of the officers of the army require of them sacrifices which no other officers of the Government are called upon to make, the expense of living has been greatly augmented, and their pay is nearly the same as that which was fixed more than fifty years ago. There is surely no economy in a practice which must in the end drive the more active and intellectual from a service which they adorn and in which their country specially requires them, to seek a competent support in some other pursuits. As little does it accord with the spirit of generosity or justice to ask at their hands the sacrifice which so many of them make to professional pride and habitual love for their country's service and their country's flag.

“Though special acts have, from time to time, made provisions for the widows and orphans of officers and soldiers of the army who have lost their lives in the discharge of their duty, no such general provisions have been made for the army as those which sub-

sist in relation to the widows of officers and seamen in the navy. If there was ever a just ground for this discrimination it is believed that it no longer exists. While the army has no claim to be paid by its Government for the capture of the public property of an enemy, large sums have from time to time inured to the Government from that source, and the policy which encourages to deeds of daring in naval warfare, by the assurance that the brave sailor who falls in maintaining the honor of his country's flag, leaves in his Government a protector and guardian to the family deprived of his support, is, certainly, in principle and degree, applicable to the soldier who perils his life in the same cause, and, without chance of being enriched by pillage, incurs the hazard of leaving his wife and children to want. I would, therefore, again recommend that such legislation be asked as will place the widows and orphans of officers and soldiers of the army on the same footing, with respect to pensions, as those of the officers and seamen of the navy.

“ I have brought forward so often the necessity of provision by which disabled officers should be retired from active service that I would be deterred from again repeating it, but for the conviction that it is indispensable to the efficiency of the army, and that each

year but renders greater the urgency to the public service resulting from the want of the measures hitherto recommended."

Again, also, he renewed his recommendations for other army reforms, as to staff and regimental officers, the fraudulent enlistment of minors, the need of improved armament for new fortifications, and the propriety and necessity of supplying the militia with only the best and most effective arms.

He recommended a greater concentration of the operation of the Ordnance Department as far as respected arsenals of construction.

"To confine such work to four principal arsenals, one at the North, one at the South of the Atlantic States, and a third in the West, on the Mississippi, at a point convenient to transportation of its product to that river, and a fourth on the Pacific coast, will secure the advantages of greater uniformity and economy in constructing, and at the same time afford practical instruction to the officers and men in all the various duties of this branch of the military service."

The Secretary made laudatory record of the commission of three military officers whom he had sent to Europe during the war between Russia, France, and England, to collect information that might be useful in our own service.

The work on the military roads in the various Territories had made gratifying progress during the year, as also the surveys of the Northwestern lakes. The progress made in the transcontinental surveys had also been satisfactory, and a brief summary of its work was presented.

The arrival of thirty-two camels in the country since the Secretary's last report was noted, and their acclimation in Texas. "The very intelligent officer who was sent abroad to procure them, and who has remained in charge of them, expresses entire confidence both of their great value for purposes of transportation and of their adaptation to the climate of a large portion of the United States."

The construction of the Capitol extension had advanced during the preceding year as rapidly as the supply of marble would permit; and equal progress, under similar difficulties, had been made in the construction of the General Post-Office Building.

During the year the territory of Kansas had been the theatre of a desultory war between the emigrants from the North and the South. Mr. Davis thus referred to it:

"Since my last report the unhappy condition of affairs in the Territory of Kansas has caused the troops stationed there to be diverted from the campaign in which it was de-



signed to employ them, against the Cheyenne Indians, and devolved upon them the delicate and most ungracious task of intervening to suppress insurrectionary movements by citizens of the United States against the organized government of the Territory. To maintain the supremacy of law, and to sustain the regularly constituted authorities of the Government, they were compelled to take the field against those whom it is their habit to regard not only with feelings of kindness but with protective care. Energy tempered with forbearance and firmness, directed by more than ordinary judgment, has enabled them to check civil strife, and to restore order and tranquillity without shedding one drop of blood. In aid of the civil authorities they have arrested violators of the peace, have expelled lawless bands from the country, and regularly guarding its borders have met and disarmed hordes of men, organized, armed, and equipped, and advancing for aggressive invasion; \* while the actual use of their uniforms has been reserved until donned against the common enemies of the United States."

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\* This clause of the report shows how strong a prejudice the Secretary of War felt against any coercion of States or Territories by the army of the United States.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

SECRETARY OF WAR, 1853-57.

“WHILE in the Senate,” Mr. Davis wrote, “I had advocated the construction of a railway to connect the valley of the Mississippi with the Pacific coast; and, when an appropriation was made to determine the most eligible route for that purpose, the Secretary of War was charged with its application. We had then but little of that minute and accurate knowledge of the interior of the continent which was requisite for the determination of the problem; several different parties were, therefore, organized to examine the various routes, supposed to be practicable, within the northwestern and southern limits of the United States. The arguments which I had used as a Senator were ‘the military necessity for such means of transportation and the need of safe and rapid communication with the Pacific slope to secure its continuance as a part of the Union.’

“In the organization and equipment of these parties, and in the selection of their officers, care was taken to provide for securing full

and accurate information upon every point involved in the determination of the route. The only discrimination made was in the more prompt and thorough equipment of the parties for the extreme northern line, and this was only because that was supposed to be the most difficult of execution of all the surveys. In like manner, my advocacy, while in the Senate, of an extension of the Capitol, by the construction of a new Senate Chamber and Hall of Representatives, may have caused the appropriation for that object to be put under my charge as Secretary of War.

“ During my administration of the War Department, material changes were made in the models of arms. Iron gun-carriages were introduced, and experiments were made, which led to the casting of heavy guns hollow, instead of boring them after casting. Inquiries were made with regard to gunpowder, which subsequently led to the use of a coarser grain for artillery.

“ During the same period the army was increased by the addition of two regiments of infantry, and two of cavalry. The officers of these regiments were chosen partly by selection from those already in service in the regular army, and partly by appointment from civil life. In making the selection for the army I was continually indebted to the assistance of

that pure-minded and accurately informed officer, Colonel Samuel Cooper, the Adjutant-General, of whom it may be proper here to say that, although his life had been spent in the army, and he, of course, had the likes and dislikes inseparable from men who are brought into close contact and occasional rivalry, I never found, in his official recommendation, any indication of partiality or prejudice toward any one.

“ When the first list was made out, to be submitted to the President, a difficulty was found to exist which had not occurred either to Colonel Cooper or myself. This was that the officers, selected purely on their military record, did not contribute a roster conforming to that distribution among the different States which, for political considerations, it was thought desirable to have; that is to say, the number of such officers of Southern birth was found to be disproportionately great. Under instructions from the President, the list was therefore revised and modified in accordance with this new element of geographical distribution. This, as I am happy to remember, was the only occasion in which the current of my official actions, while Secretary of War, was disturbed in any way by sectional or political considerations.

“ Under former administration of the War

Office, it had not been customary to make removals or appointments upon political grounds, except in the case of clerkships. To this custom I not only adhered, but extended it to include the clerkships also. The Chief Clerk, who had been removed by my predecessor, had peculiar qualifications for that place; and, although known to me only officially, he was restored to the position.

“Upon my first entrance upon duty as Secretary of War, General Jessup, the Quartermaster-General, presented me a list of names from which to make selection of a clerk for his department. Observing that he had attached certain figures to these names, I asked whether the figures were intended to indicate the relative qualifications and preference, in his estimation, of the several applicants; and upon his answer in the affirmative, without further question, authorized him to appoint “No. 1” of his list. A day or two afterward, certain Democratic members of Congress called on me and politely inquired whether it was true that I had appointed a Whig to a position in the War Office. ‘Certainly not,’ I answered. ‘We thought you had not been aware of it,’ said they, and proceeded to inform me that Mr.—(the recent appointee to the clerkship post) was a Whig. After listening patiently to their

statement, I answered that it was they who were deceived, not I. I had appointed a clerk. He had been appointed neither as a Whig, nor as a Democrat, but merely as the fittest candidate for the place, in the estimation of the Chief of the Bureau to which he belonged. I further gave them to understand that the same principle of selection would be followed in similar cases, so far as my authority extended. After some further discussion of the question, the visitors withdrew, dissatisfied with the result of the interview.

“The Quartermaster-General, on learning of this conversation, hastened to inform me that it was all a mistake—that the appointee to the office had been confounded with his father, who was a well-known Whig, but that the son was a Democrat. I answered the General that ‘this was altogether immaterial,’ adding that ‘it was a very pretty quarrel as it stood,’ and that I had no desire to effect a settlement of it in any inferior issue.

“Thenceforward, however, I was but little troubled with any pressure for political appointments in the department.”

Thus did Mr. Davis, as Secretary of War, practically inaugurate the reform now so popular in theory—the elimination of partizan considerations from official appointments, or,

as the proposed policy is now termed, "Civil Service Reform."

Mr. Davis concluded this brief record of his brilliant administration of the War Department with these modest words :

"The reader desirous for further information relative to the administration of the War Department during this period, may find it in the various official reports and estimates of works of defence prosecuted or recommended, arsenals of construction and depots of arms maintained or suggested, and foundries employed, during the Presidency of Mr. Pierce, 1853-1857."

Of the Cabinet of which he was so distinguished a member, Mr. Davis said :

"The administration of Franklin Pierce presents the only instance in our history of the continuance of a Cabinet for four years without a single change in the *personnel*. When it is remembered that there was much dissimilarity, if not incongruity, of character among the members of that Cabinet, some idea may be formed of the power over men possessed and exercised by Mr. Pierce. Chivalrous, generous, amiable, true to his faith, frank and bold in the declaration of his opinions, he never deceived anyone. And, if treachery had ever come near him, it would have stood abashed in the presence of his

truth, his manliness, and his confiding simplicity."

He revised the system of tactics, and sent an accomplished soldier, afterward General Hardee, of the Confederate service, to Paris, to study the best mode of doing so. He lent his powerful aid to the perfecting of a signal corps; fixed four years as the time for the frontier service of officers; thus making rotation the rule, and leaving them independent of the favor of officials at headquarters. He sold the military reservations not needful for the uses of the United States, and thus rendered great service to the States within which they were located, and thereby also added much money to the treasury.

Foreseeing frequent interruptions by ice and snow of trains for the Pacific shore by the contemplated northern route, he sketched out a southern route, very nearly the one now adopted, and had it surveyed. All these good works, and more than I can cite, he performed with all his might, and that which was necessarily left unfinished when he retired from office he took up as chairman of the Military Committee, where he was at once placed when he re-entered the Senate. His experience with unscientific inventors who knew nothing of the laws of matter or exact



science, would of itself make a book ; but one anecdote must suffice here.

An old man, who had invented a cannon that would carry an enormous ball, came to the Secretary of War to get his recommendation that Congress should appropriate a large sum for the purpose of having one cast for experiment. In conversation, the Secretary found that he knew little, if anything, of the laws of physics, and nothing of the expansion and contraction of metals under heat and pressure. The Secretary declined to commend the plans and specifications to Congress, for he saw that the gun must burst when fired. The inventor took his papers to Congress, and succeeded in getting an appropriation of \$7,000. He then made requisitions on the War Department for assistance, which was accorded without a demurrer. When the gun was finished he applied for a gunner to fire it. The Secretary said, " I cannot give you a man's life, and you must find someone else to fire it. I will not order a soldier to do so." The consequence was, as the inventor did not feel willing to do it himself, it was never tried, and was at the navy yard the last Mr. Davis heard of it.

In addition to these labors, many of which were finished successfully in his period of service, he gave such valuable suggestions to

workmen at Colt's Armory that they made him a pistol, on the silver breech of which they engraved the words, "To a brother inventor."

He had numberless forts repaired and rehabilitated, notably the one in Portland harbor, for which, at one time, it seemed impossible to construct a solid foundation. He enabled his Government to settle the boundary of San Juan De Ulloa by his judicious choice of the admirable officer whom he sent to make the survey. In the evenings at home, he personally translated a book on the service of camels, from the French, and succeeded in getting them brought out for the uses of army transportation across the arid prairies, and if the experiment had been properly and persistently pushed to its legitimate results, we should now have the prairies covered with these "ships of the desert," and the facilities for the transportation of armies much increased.

The following notice is extracted from the *Florida Herald*, Jacksonville, Fla. :

"During Mr. Pierce's administration an effort was made by Mr. Benton to have the work of the coast survey divided into several independent bureaus, his special purpose being to place his son-in-law, then Captain J. C. Frémont, as Superintendent of the Bureau

proposed to be established on the Pacific coast. To attain his object, he made a deliberate and violent attack on the coast survey, fortified himself in the reports of surveys carried on under the Ordnance Bureau in England, and encyclopædia skimming of similar works on the continent.

“The ablest and best-posted defender of the superintendent was Mr. Jefferson Davis, then Senator from Mississippi. He graduated in the same class with Professor Bache, and was his life-long friend.

“With far more accurate knowledge of the subject than Mr. Benton, and advised by Professor Bache, he made a searching and exhaustive review of the coast survey, and a close comparison of its results, both in time of execution and quality of work, with the English survey. The result was greatly to the advantage of Professor Bache. His reputation was not only vindicated, but it was shown that he surpassed the work of the English Government in some important particulars, especially in economy, and in the adoption of the most modern improvements.

“The public first became aware, by this ventilation of the question on the high arena of the Senate Chamber, of the value and importance of the survey, and American pride was gratified at the high standard maintained

by the United States, both in the scientific and practical development of a great enterprise. The impression made upon the Senate was shown in the vote. Mr. Benton's bill received only two votes, his own being one of the two.

Some years ago, when it was thought that Mr. Davis had passed from earth, John W. Forney used the following language :

"Jefferson Davis was blessed with many accomplishments. He was alike a soldier and statesman. No public man of my acquaintance was more devoted to scientific pursuits, and more familiar with the abstruse teachings of political philosophy. No branch of human knowledge seemed to be unworthy of his investigation. He was equally attentive to classical literature, to the details of military life, to the doctrines of political parties, to the study of men, and if Professor Bache, of the coast survey, could speak, he would say, of the fine work of which he was the accomplished head, and which has latterly proved its incalculable usefulness, that Jefferson Davis was as conversant with the smallest minutiae of the noble institution as any man not directly connected with it. He was passionately devoted to the Smithsonian Institute, of which he was a regent in former times. He devoted himself to the decora-

tion of the capital, and stood by Captain (now General) Meigs in all his efforts to construct the waterworks, finish the Capitol building on the grandest scale, and to push forward the extension of the interior of the Treasury department. He was undoubtedly a great Secretary of War, and in this high office nothing delighted him as to take young men by the hand, and, when worthy, advance them."

In summing up the many services rendered by Mr. Davis when Secretary of War, a writer in a Northern paper says :

"He revised the Army Regulations ; he introduced light infantry, or the rifle system of tactics ; he caused the manufacture of rifles, muskets, and pistols, and the use of the Minié ball ; he induced the addition of four regiments to the army, and organized a cavalry service peculiarly adapted to the wants of the country ; he augmented the sea-coast and frontier defences of the country, and had the western part of the continent explored for scientific, geographical, and railroad purposes."

On the morning of March 4, 1857, at nine o'clock, he had a long and tender interview with his friend and superior officer, President Pierce, who received his resignation, the first presented by any member of his Cabinet, and

grasping his hand, said, " I can scarcely bear the parting from you, who have been strength and solace to me for four anxious years and never failed me." At twelve o'clock he was sworn in to take his seat in the Senate.

The city was full to overflowing ; the President-elect was expected to stay at the old National Hotel, three squares from the Capitol ; but, fortunately, went to Willard's Hotel. However, great numbers of the leading men from all quarters of the country came to the National to consult with Mr. Buchanan on the many points of interest which were then at issue. In some mysterious way (it was suggested by some that the water had stood in the lead pipes too long) all who partook of food or drink there for two weeks or more were poisoned. At first it was bruited abroad that an effort had been made to poison the incoming President and his Cabinet, that he was only saved by the chance of his going to another hotel, etc. ; but at last the lead poison was ascertained to be a fact, and the excitement quieted down, but the accident plunged many families into mourning. Mississippi lost a gallant soldier, a faithful advocate, and useful citizen from this cause, General John Anthony Quitman, and she mourned him with a deep sense of his rare moral qualities and great civil and military services.

The day of the inauguration I went to Willard's Hotel parlor to see the procession, and Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Cass, and Governor Marcy came to speak to me. I was much impressed with Mr. Buchanan's kind, deferential manner, and the friendly way in which he inquired for Mr. and Mrs. Pierce. He was gracious because he felt kindly. After the ceremony, Mr. and Mrs. Pierce returned at once to Concord and resumed the course of their former quiet and uneventful lives. In the summer, Mr. and Mrs. Pierce and Nathaniel Hawthorne made the tour through Europe of which Hawthorne, in his published diaries, wrote so charmingly.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### CABINET LIFE.

IN the summer of 1853 I left New Orleans, under the care of Major T. P. Andrews of the army, to join Mr. Davis in Washington, with my baby, my little sister, Margaret Graham, and brother, Becket Kempe Howell; the two latter were going to school. We remained a day in Mobile, and the little ten-year old boy went to dinner alone. He had never been at a hotel before. The waiter laid down the wine card before him, of which the child ordered several bottles. He drank a teaspoonful of it and then told me in confidence: "I suppose the people of the hotel give it, and some of them drink it. I tried, but I could not." He thought it was included in the ordinary charge for board. We departed shortly after the yellow fever had appeared in the city. General David Twiggs came to bid me good-bye the day before I left, and told me that Colonel Bliss was quite ill with the disease; the day after I reached Washington, his death was announced. He was a handsome man, of very dignified mien, an accomplished soldier,



a graceful writer, and was such a rare union of all that renders a man acceptable to his fellow-men that at West Point he ~~used to~~ be called "Perfect Bliss."

The water is so near the surface about the city that to obtain sepulture is an anxious consideration with those who bury their dead there, and tombs are built in the walls of the cemetery by many. In this epidemic, however, the people died in such numbers that it became necessary to burn many of the dead.

When we reached Washington we found Mr. Davis had rented a furnished house on Thirteenth Street, temporarily, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Brodhead were taking care of him in my absence.

Here Mr. Guthrie, who was much esteemed and beloved by our whole family, used to come in the evening and talk his strong common-sense. Sometimes he favored me with shrewd criticisms of men and things. Once he was very indignant with Mr. Cushing for "ripping out his scientific stuff to impress me; but I have found, and so told Mr. Cushing, that I do not know much, but things I do know well, he does not." Once Mr. Guthrie sat down in one of the trumpery chairs in our furnished house, and being very tired, dropped asleep. He was a very large man and proved too much for the chair, so it

gave way with a crack which wakened him. He ~~rose~~ deliberately, examined the chair for some minutes, ~~then~~ looked at me quizzically, and said, "You know a man is heavier when he is asleep, do you suppose it possible I could have been asleep?" He lived a few doors from us, and Mr. Cushing boarded not far off. Mr. Campbell lived more in the centre of the city, and Governor Marcy only a few squares from the Executive Mansion. Mr. Dobbin, the Secretary of the Navy, was also quite near, so that the Executive family of Mr. Pierce could be summoned to a meeting in an hour or less time.

From this house, which had been taken by Mr. Benjamin for the winter, we moved in a few months to one round the corner on Thirteenth Street, and there lived a year. There our only child sickened, and after several weeks of pain and steady decline, died at twenty-three months old; and his lovely personality had even at that early age impressed itself on many people. He was Mr. Davis's first thought when the door opened, and the little fellow would wait as patiently as possible, sometimes a quarter of an hour, at the door to kiss his father first. He was much beloved by Mrs. Pierce, who constantly sent or called for him to drive with her.

For many months afterward, Mr. Davis

walked half the night, and worked fiercely all day. A child's cry in the street well-nigh drove him mad, and to the last hour of his life he occasionally spoke of "the strong young man on whose arm, had God so willed it, I might have leaned and gone down to my grave." The sympathy of thousands is gratifying and acceptable as a tribute to the living as well as to the dead, but one misses sorely the opportunity to mourn in secret.

While we lived here, Colonel Delafield, Major Mordecai and Captain McClellan were sent as a military commission to the Crimea to study the methods of war adopted there. They were to visit England, France, and Russia as well. We invited the general officers of the Army and the ambassadors from these countries to meet the Commission. Generals Scott, Jessup, and Totten were present. Colonel Delafield was an alert soldierly man with much of scientific acquirement, but a curt manner. Major Mordecai was a Hebrew, and one could readily understand, after seeing him, how that race had furnished the highest type of manhood; his mind was versatile, at times even playful, but his habits of thought were of the most serious problems, and so perfectly systematized as to make everything evolved from his fecund mind available for the use of mankind.

His moral nature was as well disciplined as his mental, and his private life was of the purest and most admirable; he was an "Israelite without guile."

Captain McClellan was quite young, and looked younger than he really was from an inveterate habit of blushing when suddenly addressed; his modesty, his gentle manner, and the appositeness of the few remarks he made, gave us a most favorable impression of him. The instinct of protection was strong in General Scott, and he assumed a protectorate over Captain McClellan at once. General Totten and he were talking about trap-rock in an undertone, while General Scott was explaining to the Comte de Sartige how to cook terrapin, "mixing the wine with a judicious flavoring of spice, but no flour, sir—not a grain." Captain McClellan just then uttered the word "trap." General Scott set his fork rampant and called across the table, "No, sir—*I say no*, they are *never* caught in traps." General Totten explained in his debonnaire way that they were speaking of trap-rock, but the General gave us a disquisition upon the proper manner of chasing buffalo upon the plains, and wound up with the announcement, "I have never heard of their being caught in a trap, sir."

The horror of a wrangle, and the embarrass-

ment of having the attention of the whole table called to his conversation, turned Captain McClellan a fine rosy purple.

The French Minister expressed to me in a whisper his profound sympathy with General Scott's labors in having, "according to the necessity of his nature, to teach the whole company at once."

Each one of the ministers present had given assurance of the willing co-operation of their Government with the labors of the commission; but our officers were afterward not granted the facilities by France for which Comte de Sartige hoped—in fact they received scant courtesy, which was amply made up, however, by the kindness of the English and Russian Governments.

They proceeded to the seat of war, where they messed with the English officers, saw the defects of their commissariat, their consequent suffering, their splendid gallantry in action, and compared the methods of the French and English in active warfare. After the "Malakoff" was taken they went into Russia. There Captain McClellan mastered the language in three months in order to read their books on military science, and when the commission returned the fruits of their journey were as prodigal and fair as those brought by the spies from the Promised Land. The dis-

criminating world praised the acumen of the Secretary who had sought out so able a commission, and the labors of the accomplished soldiers who had done honor to his choice.

Mr. Davis's appreciation of Captain McClellan was an instance of his happy faculty of discerning the merits of young people and "drawing" them into sympathetic communion with him by his charm of manner. There was a refined assumption of equality and co-intelligence between himself and them, which conciliated them at once. If he expressed a decided opinion, it was prefaced by "I take it for granted you will coincide with me in the opinion," etc. He pursued this plan even with children, and always with servants. A striking instance of this occurred with my little brother Jeff. When he was nine years old I sent him to his brother to be rebuked for playing "hookie" from school; he returned not disconcerted, but quite cheerful. I asked him what Mr. Davis had said. He answered, "Oh! I shall not do it again, but brother Jeff knows how a man feels, and understands that he sometimes gives way when he is bored without meaning to do it."

As soon as practicable, when our year was out in this house, we removed to one once occupied by Mr. Edward Everett, at the corner of F and Fourteenth Streets, much nearer

to the War Department, not larger, but more commodious.

The President had brought with him from Concord the son of a widowed friend, to be his private secretary. Sidney Webster was a young man of pleasant, decorous manners, and a nice sense of propriety and honor. He made himself acceptable to the President's Cabinet, and to visitors very generally. The position is a difficult one to fill, and the temptation is very great to a young man to arrogate to himself the importance due alone to his office. Mr. Webster was the most impersonal private secretary of all I have known in that position. It is doubtful whether he knew how to make political combinations, or ever tried to effect any, but he was all the more successful for the lack of such effort. He rendered every needful courtesy, performed punctiliously every duty, and for the rest was a great favorite in society, and enjoyed his leisure hours exceedingly. As one grows old and wiser than of yore, the things that friends do not do are even more occasions of grateful memory than the deeds they perform; for that reason it is so hard to describe a thorough gentleman, so many of his virtues are those of abstention.

Mrs. Pierce was a broken-hearted woman in weak health, and not a person who found

it easy to become acquainted with strangers. She had one child, a very promising boy, and, after Mr. Pierce's election, while the three were taking a little journey together, there was an accident which precipitated the train down a steep bank. Mr. Pierce found his little Ben insensible, as he supposed, but upon removing his cap saw that the poor lad's head was crushed.

The grief-stricken mother was brought to Washington, more dead than alive. Certainly there was little in the new life she led there to comfort or cheer her, and her depression was rendered still greater by being a constant sufferer from an obscure ailment. She was very small, and never could have been pretty, but was very well read, intelligent, and gentle, and was a person of strong will and clear perceptions; her husband's society was the one thing necessary to her, and he was too overworked to give her much of his time. She was so like the picture of Mrs. Elizabeth Barrett Browning that one who knew her was deceived into believing that it was her likeness. She had a keen sense of the ridiculous, but was too ceremonious to indulge it often. She lived much within herself. With her sorrow pressed close to her stricken heart she bore her position with patience and gentle dignity.



Of Mr. Pierce I cannot speak as reliably as another who loved him less. All sympathies seemed united in him. No one was so poor that, in any honorable personality, Mr. Pierce could not do him reverence. His door-keeper once speaking of him, said: "He does not keep his manners for the fine folks that come here, but he gives me the compliments of the morning as grandly as he does to General Scott."

His courtesy was unfailing—he was incapable of feigning, and was, if he disapproved of anything a friend had done, gravely sincere and plain in the expression of his opinion, but in the reproof there was no semblance of a sense of superiority, and this took out all the sting. He was one of the most genuinely honest, upright men I have ever known. His wants were few, his personal habits were rather elegant. He accepted no presents, but did not seem to think it a matter to be vaunted, though he dearly loved to give, and gave much to the needy.

At the time the first expedition to Japan returned home there were sent as presents a large number of curios and much fine lacquer work—besides some Japanese dogs—very singular animals, unknown in the United States at that time. Mr. Pierce came over to see us early after breakfast the day after

they arrived, as glad as a boy to have something to give to his friend. He was hardly seated before he burst out with, "General, I have a dog for you." Mr. Davis said, "What can I do with a dog in town?" "Oh!" said the President, "you can put it in a tea-saucer, if it crowds your house." The house had twenty-three rooms in it, and our family were four in number. It was in those days one of the most spacious dwellings in Washington. After this sally, Mr. Pierce went on to say that if I chose I might "abstract" some of the exquisite presents sent by the Japanese Government as they belonged to no one; but Mr. Davis said, "In that case my wife knows they do not belong to her." So we went over and looked on while the beautiful things were unpacked—and had a barmecide feast of the eyes. In the evening a messenger arrived from the President, who took out of his coat pocket a little creature with a head like a bird with a blunt beak, eyes large and popped, and a body like a new-born puppy of the smallest kind. He was prettily marked with a band of white about his otherwise jet-black body. A coffee-saucer made an ample scampering ground for him. On a tiny string about his neck was traced Bonin—because he was born in passing the Bonin Islands. Thus was installed Mr. Davis's pet and the scourge

of the servants and of the family. Bonin was so small and dark that it was difficult to distinguish him from the hues of the carpet, and if ever a bashful young lieutenant came to pay his respects to the Secretary of War, he entered in a somersault over the dog, or he trod on it, and Bonin, yelping out his indignation, had to be soothed by his master. If I complained of this nuisance Mr. Davis bowed and offered to "build a house for myself and my dog." However Bonin grew to be somewhat less troublesome as he gained in age and experience.

When he left Washington, in 1861, he was given to Patrick Jordon, Mr. Davis's faithful messenger, to be reclaimed when convenient, but this distinguished Japanese, one of the first who acquired citizenship by years of residence, went in an unhappy hour during the war to a fair, where the persons present, finding out that the little dog was Mr. Davis's, fed him with so many dainties that he died of indigestion. His master never ceased to talk of and regret him.

We never understood why Mr. Pierce was undervalued and spoken of by his opponents as a man of no force, except that he never assumed anything, and when he asserted himself, which was not seldom, the desire to make the dissonance as little painful to his

opponents as possible, gave him the air of seeking a compromise.

He never yielded a point to his Cabinet on which he had once expressed an opinion, and no one of them, and they were nearly all positive men, would have thought of presuming to dictate to him. Only once, I believe, was there any serious divergence between him and Mr. Davis. Mr. Davis expressed his inability to agree with the President, and after the Cabinet meeting he came home and told me the circumstance, and that he could not recede, as he looked upon the act as subversive of justice. He added, "I will not insist upon my view of the matter, but I will resign rather than embarrass the President, or do what I consider an injustice." Late in the evening the President sent an explanatory note, offering to announce himself responsible for the objectionable course, and so it was settled. Mr. Davis has given an account of the slight dissonance elsewhere. A most absurd thing occurred through my sympathy with a young couple who were about to be separated in consequence of the husband being ordered to San Francisco at a critical time for the wife. Personally anxious about his wife, the lieutenant craved a postponement of three or four weeks; but General Scott refused the application. The officer had mar-

ried into the Taylor family and the general was not intent upon serving them.

There were no railways then to that distant State and to go there one must cross the Isthmus, or double the Cape. Then the journey was more tedious and the communication more difficult than it now is with China. In my distress I appealed to the Secretary of War, but he said: "I cannot interfere with General Scott's prerogatives; it would be offensive, and our relations are now strained. I am as much troubled about it as you are." I laughingly said, "I shall appeal to the President," and accordingly wrote to him at once, that the Secretary of War declined to relieve the lieutenant, that I thought it unnecessary severity, and that I hoped he would grant the delay, and signed it V. H. Davis. Weeks passed on and no answer came. The President rode up to my carriage the evening preceding the parting of the young people, and noticing that I was depressed, asked what had "gone awry." I told him, and said, "I have never asked any favor of you except this, and it was an intensely personal one to me." He laughed heartily and said, "I noticed the handwriting, how much like the General's it was, and thought it a man's hand and referred the note to him, but I will go at once and send General Scott a request to

postpone the young fellow's departure for two months." He went back home immediately and arranged everything satisfactorily. In the meanwhile I interrogated my husband about the note. He smiled, and said, "You had a right, Madam, to be put on file, and there you are." For some time after this whenever the President saw me he inquired if my "young people were all right."

## CHAPTER XL.

### SOCIAL RELATIONS AND INCIDENTS OF CABINET LIFE, 1853-57.

THE wives of Mr. Pierce's Cabinet officers labored in their sphere as well as their husbands. We each endeavored to extend hospitality to every member of Congress, of both Houses, at least once during the winter. We did not "bank the mantels with flowers" as is done now, for very good reasons—it was not the fashion, and many of us, I, for one, could not bear the heavy odor in a crowded room. We bought, out of our private purses, all the flowers we used, and we were none of us what would in this day be called rich. If we had been so at the beginning of the official term, we should have become poorer every day, as well from inattention to our private affairs as to the utter inadequacy of the salary. A few palms or azaleas growing in pots, and other ornamental plants grouped about the room, made them acceptable, and ignorance was "bliss" to us. If a measure was to be recommended by the Administration, the Chairmen of the Legislative Committee, to whom these recom-

mendations would be referred, were invited and the plan was informally unfolded to them. If a man was dissatisfied with the Administration and not personally offensive in his disapprobation, he was invited to breakfast or some informal meal, where a personal explanation was possible. However, these methods probably prevail now as they did then, and will continue so to do until trees cease to "bear fruit after their kinds."

If a scientific association met at Washington, or whenever any distinguished people met in convention, they were invited as a body to an entertainment in their honor.

At one of these I remember a remarkable experience. The morning of the day on which the Association visited us, Dr. Robert Hare, at that time the most noted chemist in America, had endeavored to read a paper which he had written upon mechanical tests of spiritual manifestations. The paper was not accepted and declared irrelevant, and he felt much hurt. Upon my making the remark, I being quite ignorant of this occurrence, that I had been with a party of ladies to see Miss Fox, who was afterward Mrs. Kane, and felt humbugged, but could nevertheless not account for the noises made, or the answers to questions asked her, Professor Hare immediately stated his grievance against the so-



ciety, prefacing it with "Truth is the Mother of Science, and her children should not be ashamed of her." He then proceeded to tell me that he had been impressed by some unaccountable phenomena in the practice of Spiritualism, and determined to submit the presence of disembodied spirits to a mechanical test. He made a disk and put the letters of the alphabet all over it in "pi." In the centre he placed two index-hands, on the outer edge there were figures which one hand registered, while the other hand indicated letters. He attached a sensitive lever to the disk—he did not explain the machinery, but told me that the spirits spelled out difficult chemical problems by the aid of the letters—and pulled down the lever to the weight of 150 pounds. Professor Henry came up while his confrere was speaking, and smilingly turned the conversation by saying: "Now if Daddy Lambert were alive and could be induced to weigh himself, then we should be convinced;" but the jest seemed to very much annoy Professor Hare.

Professor Henry was a most attractive man, whose wisdom made his "face to shine," but though he was plain and quiet in manner he so loved his pursuits, that with the mention of them, he became alert and communicative. Once, when Mr. Davis had been enjoying the Professor's learning, a member of Con-

gress who wore dark-green spectacles and who indulged in aspirations, without remembering that endeavor should supplement them, came in and whispered: "I wish Professor Henry would talk to me about weighing the stars." Mr. Davis turned the conversation into that channel; other company coming in, he left the pair together. When he looked at them an hour afterward, the member was rigid and sound asleep behind his spectacles, and the gentle Professor was taking the measure of the solar system with a benign air.

Once Professor Henry and I went to Alexandria together on the little ferryboat. He began describing a visit which he had just made to the circus, but in the midst of his talk, suddenly stopped and looked intently at a little valance nailed around the seat which was describing constant succeeding undulations as the wind blew the ruffle—he had stopped at the antics of the "so-called tame rhinoceros;" and after ten minutes' silence he added, "and the same forces may make the undulations of the waves, to say nothing of the tides, which are less understood."

I did not remind him of the hiatus, and he talked most charmingly of cognate subjects until we reached the house of good old Mr.

Hallowell, to whom my little brother, Becket Kempe Howell, was going to school. Mr. Hallowell was a "Friend," and was equally esteemed and beloved by the whole community, among whom he had lived from youth to old age. He said, "Thy brother is always seeking for a royal road to knowledge, and is dull at figures." Professor Henry, seeing the child was mortified, kindly took his hand and said, "Send him to me and I will explain the rule of three to him. I gratefully accepted his offer, and he did explain so distinctly that Becket never forgot the lesson or the rule. If great men knew how acceptable their condescension is to the ignorant, they would cultivate the amenities of life.

Professor John LeComte was another of the savans who impressed me most pleasantly; he brought with him his exquisitely beautiful wife, who shone resplendent among the quiet old figures there. Professors Agassiz and Pearce, with a whole galaxy of scholars and specialists, were present, whose names will go sounding down the aisles that science treads, as pioneers of its discoveries and builders of its temples.

There were dinners given to the officers of the Army, especially by the Secretary of War, where they unbent like boys and told campaign stories—General Gibson, the Commis-

sary-General, General Jessup, the Quartermaster-General, General Lawson, the Surgeon-General, General Towson, Paymaster-General, Colonel Abert, of the Topographical Engineers, and a number of others of less degree. At one of these dinners General Jessup entered upon a flood of memories of the time when he was staying with some other officers, by invitation, at Kempton, with Colonel James Kempe, at Natchez, Miss. He laughed over and repeated a piece of doggerell to which each man added a line as it went round the table, and then proceeded to describe their host's exquisite performance on the flute; "but," said the dear old General, "when we made him sing 'The Tough Old Commodore,' he talked it and could not turn a tune." While there, Aaron Burr was arrested at Natchez, and he and his captors were also bidden to Kempton.

There was a short parley among all the guests and the host, and it was decided to ignore Colonel Burr's condition; so he came to Kempton, sardonic and brilliant, but entirely impersonal in his conversation. The General turned to me and said, "I wonder you did not know those people, as you lived at Natchez. Major Chotard was a charming young fellow also, who was on a visit there."

I quietly answered I did not know them,

but my mother did. Colonel Kempe was her father, and Colonel Burr was my father's second cousin on the maternal side. I did know Major Chotard, who was an elegant man, a refugee from St. Domingo, who illustrated most manly charms and virtues in his own person.

During one of these "General's dinners," as we called them, someone said that men were worse than they used to be. My husband exclaimed, "That would disprove the Christian theory that, with the diffusion of our Lord's system of morals, mankind would unconsciously be moulded into higher forms of thought and nobler action."

General Jessup, who, in his own personality, was a fine example of Christian culture, said, with some heat—there was never a more pernicious statement, or one more untrue. He then went on to show that the vices of the Quartermaster, in his youth, were those a sergeant of the regulars would blush to commit now—the petty peculations, he said, were nauseating in that day—"time has drawn a curtain over the unseemly sight." General Gibson coincided with him that people were growing steadily better. General Jessup, speaking of the force of habit, said he could not understand a man becoming subject to it, and told me that early in life he found

that smoking made him nervous, and from that time he had set aside the money that would otherwise have been spent for tobacco and used it for books. "Now," said he, "I have a fine library all bought with cigar money." General Gibson was a man so beloved that I never heard one derogatory word of him. He never was known to deny charity to those who asked it of him, and no man who had merited his good opinion would willingly forfeit it, or having taken his advice doubted his wisdom. His nephew, whom he brought up, Colonel George Gibson, of the United States Army, long afterward proved the heredity of nature by his own life of usefulness. He was honored in a less degree only than his uncle had been, and was equally worthy and beloved.

General Totten was an exceedingly elegant man in his deportment, and most kind-hearted and observant of all the courtesies of life, besides being a soldier in the scientific sense of the term. The Surgeon-General was a spare, keen-eyed man of warm sympathies, hot resentments, and great dignity. He was a clever physician, and had a composure of manner most reassuring under trying circumstances; but he suffered under one idiosyncrasy of which I have never seen another example. The moment the name of a person

he disliked was mentioned, he unfolded a large bandanna handkerchief and commenced sneezing, which continued spasmodically until something diverted his attention. The sight of a witty old lady who disputed the boundary line of their adjacent property, and had offended him grievously once by one of her caustic remarks, used to make him sneeze so he could not talk to her, but between sneezes he said, "I'll write, madam, I'll write."

Of General Scott I saw but little. He was a great-looking man, with the grandiose manner, in a less degree than his, quite common to the men of his day. Mr. Davis and he had an unfortunate difference about a claim of General Scott's for pay, which he could not allow. This led to a correspondence painful to both, which, having passed out of sight, it is useless to recall.

An unusual number of pleasant people were in Washington during Mr. Pierce's Administration. In the winter of 1854, Mr. Charles O'Connor came there with his handsome bride, the *ci-devant* Mrs. McCracken. I knew so little then of New York lawyers, and had only heard of him through his knightly defence of Mrs. Forest, that I should not have noticed the announcement of his presence; but after his noble head, illumined by large sensitive gray eyes, met my sight, the impres-

sion he made was never forgotten. His deliberate manner of speaking in a man of less calibre would have been tiresome, but one can patiently wait for treasures no matter how slowly they may be doled out. They were much fêted and we met them everywhere, and had the pleasure of receiving them at our own house several times. At that time Mr. O'Connor conceived the respect and regard for my husband which bore such priceless fruit in our day of helplessness and sorrow.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles King, of Columbia College, spent the winter in Washington, and Mrs. King remains an ideal old lady to me, her accomplishments were so varied and her judgment, breeding, and temper were so perfect. Mrs. Gracie was also there—a dignified, agreeable woman. General Gracie, of the Confederate Army, her splendidly gallant son, afterward died on the battle-field and his loss was bitterly mourned by the whole army as well as by his beautiful young widow. Mr. Edward Everett also spent the winter there, a man whom to know was to admire, for his social graces were in excess even of his oratory. The Honorable A. Dudley Mann remained throughout the season in the city, and then I first beheld this “perfect man.” To all the accomplishments of a trained diplomat he united every Christian virtue; with a de-



testation and scorn of wickedness he nevertheless grieved over the sinner, and was in his own life a shining exemplar of the Christian charity that "suffereth long and is kind." He left a history of his life and times which I hope his son will soon publish, for his reminiscences will be of rare value to the world of letters. Mr. Davis and he gravitated toward each other at once, and loved like David and Jonathan, until extreme old age, and my husband only tarried here a month after Mr. Mann, but did not know his friend had "crossed over" before him.

One of the men of mark at this time was Mr. Charles Sumner. He was a handsome, unpleasing man, and an athlete whose physique proclaimed his physical strength. His conversation was studied but brilliant, his manner deferential only as a matter of social policy; consequently, he never inspired the women to whom he was attentive with the pleasant consciousness of possessing his regard or esteem. He was, until his fracas with Mr. Brooks, fond of talking to Southern women, and prepared himself with great care for these conversational pyrotechnics, in which, as well as I remember, there was much Greek fire, and the "set pieces" were numerous; he never intruded his peculiar views upon us in any degree, but read up on

the Indian mutiny, lace, Demosthenes, jewels, Seneca's morals, intaglios, the Platonian theory, and once gave me quite an interesting résumé of the history of dancing. Mr. George Sumner, who was rather a short man and thick-set, also spent part of the winter in the city upon his return from the Crimea, which he had visited as the reporter for some newspapers. He talked in the same predetermined artificial way, but had much that was new and interesting to tell. One evening, in the presence of two officers of the army at our house, he said he had ridden camels without a bridle. "How did you guide them?" said General Emory. "By my foot touching them first one side or the other on the nose," answered Mr. Sumner. General Emory took out a pencil and made a calculation, and after Mr. Sumner had passed to other subjects, the General interjected suddenly the remark, "According to my calculation, your leg must be nine feet long to guide a camel as you did." Mr. Sumner made no response. He had a large collection of field maps made in the Crimea, and traced the course of the different battles in a very interesting manner with little tin flags.

At midsummer we took a house two or three miles out of town, and spent the heated

term there, so that I could be near my husband, who was far from robust.

Mr. and Mrs. Pierce used frequently to come to us for the day, and such intimate talks, such unrestrained intercourse and pleasantries exchanged are charming memories. He became eloquent over the genius, the shy, tender ways, and the agreeable conversation of his friend Hawthorne one day, and stuck his hands in his pockets as he paced up and down. Mrs. Pierce cast an appealing look at the recusant hands, to which the President answered, "No; I won't take them out of my pockets, Jennie! I am in the country, and I like to feel the comfort of it."

He took a never-failing delight in talking to our little Maggie, who was a clever child of eighteen months, and could talk and walk. He eight years afterward related, during a visit to us at Fortress Monroe, the incident of her suppressing her tears when the dog snapped at her, lying down beside him until he went to sleep, and then biting him on the nose as retribution.

One of the measures of Mr. Davis's administration of the War Department was what was called the four years rule. That an officer should not remain on duty at distant posts, or at ease in Washington, for more than four years. To some the army had been

a sinecure. They remained year after year, made welcome by every host, and, it is fair to say, contributing their full quota to the social enjoyment of the capital, while others tramped from outpost to outpost with their families, knowing Washington only through their marching orders. Sometimes the enforcement of this rule was as painful to Mr. Davis as to the recipient of the order. Notably in the case of his dear and intimate friend, Major Robert Anderson, who had been stationed at a most agreeable and healthful post in Kentucky, and very much desired to remain there. The reply of the Secretary of War is appended, and explains itself:

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON,  
October 5, 1854.

HON. J. C. BRECKENRIDGE,  
Lexington, Kentucky.

DEAR SIR: I have received your letter of the 22d ult., transmitting a petition of several citizens for the retention of Major Anderson, U. S. Army, as Governor of the Military Asylum at Harrodsburg Springs.

In reply thereto, I have to inform you that the change of Brevet-Major Anderson's station results from a rule of the Department, lately instituted, that captains shall not be separated from their companies for the performance of

detached duty. Major Anderson is an old friend of mine of many years' standing, and if personal considerations controlled in such matters it would only be necessary for me to know his wishes. Should he apply for a leave of absence, it will be considered as favorably as the emergencies of the service will permit.

Very truly yours,

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

One charming young fellow, who was the best dancer of his day, went to a surgeon for a certificate that his health did not permit his braving the hardships of the frontier. It was given him in the cognate language formulated by the medical faculty from the Latin. He took it and went to his post, bidding farewell, "for only a few days," to his regretful friends. When he reached Fort Worth, to which he was ordered, and presented his certificate, the surgeon laughed immoderately, and told him it was a certificate that he had suffered from an accumulation of dandruff in his hair; that he was quite bald and his head glistened only added to his indignation. This came very near causing a duel with his jocular medical friend.

Many officers having become established in the city, and being hampered in many ways, resigned, and there was wide-spread dissatis-

faction among the ease-loving minority in the different cities, and many appeals for a prolonged stay ; but the Secretary was inflexible. However, he ran when the wives appealed, and always showed the "white feather" to them, but without surrendering at discretion.

At this same time Mr. Dobbin was in trouble on account of the projected reorganization of the navy, and many were dropped. One of them who had fared badly thus explained the situation to me : " There are, you see, three causes for dismissal, mental, moral, and physical unfitness. I had all three."

There were fine old men who had never for a moment believed the navy could exist without them, but who for some good reason had been " waiting orders " for fifteen years, from whom all means of existence were taken away when they were too old to work. They woke up from comfort and dignity, to find themselves poverty-stricken and discredited, for at that time there was neither an army nor a navy retired list. The injustice was manifest, and their grief and humiliation most painful to witness. The whole city pulsed with sympathy.

The Retiring Board, presided over by Commodore Shubrick, was composed of the best men available for the purpose, but, of course, private pique was one of the reasons assigned

for their action, and the atmosphere was murky with tears and indignation. Mr. Dobbin actually became feverish and all unstrung under the pressure brought to bear upon him. A lady pursued him so relentlessly that he said: "My dear Madam, you shall, if you please, have my resignation to hand to the President, if you think you can procure a reversal of the decision from anyone else."

One poor woman met me in the Senate gallery, and said, "What can they mean by unfitness, my husband is six feet two in his stocking feet." An example of the non sequitur in reasoning which is not often excelled. Under the pleadings of the unfortunates, in which all classes united, many of them were restored to their positions, but it was necessarily a time of great trial, and the ruin of a great many who were lost that the navy might live.

This experience added new vigor to Mr. Davis's efforts to introduce a retired list, as he was most painfully depressed by the mortification and suffering of his old friends.

During his four years in the Cabinet he worked with an increasing ardor that tired out all his assistants—sometimes he came home to dinner at two o'clock in the morning, bringing with him his dear friend and coadjutor, Colonel Samuel Cooper, Adjutant-General of the United States Army, who, being much

older than my husband, looked ready to faint. Luncheon with wine was often sent from home to the War Department, but Mr. Davis forgot to eat or offer the repast to the Colonel.

When Mr. Buchanan came into office, Colonel Cooper gravely said that the consolation he felt for losing Mr. Davis was that he could rest; "for," said he, "another four years would have killed me; Mr. Davis is never tired, he takes no account of time."

Amidst all this eager labor, the humblest soldier could get an interview with him as readily as the greatest general.

One day a woman called at our house before he was up, at seven o'clock, and was given audience; after a half-hour's talk with her, Mr. Davis came in to our breakfast-room with a soiled, yelling little boy by one hand, and followed by a frowsy young woman with a crying baby. He ordered a chair placed for her at the table, courteously invited her to be seated, and led the child up to me, saying, "My little man, there is a lady who comforts crying boys." After quiet was restored, it was developed that she had come to appeal from a sentence pronounced against her husband, who was a private in the ranks, and Mr. Davis had promised I should take care of the children until she could go to visit the President and appeal for a pardon. He accom-



panied her and secured it, while I performed the expiatory sacrifice at home. The poor creature came back in the course of time, bringing me a note from my husband begging that the family might have an early dinner, a dollar be given to each of the children, and the butler be sent to pay their passage home and see them off safely on the train.

This was not an isolated instance ; for hundreds could be cited of his tender consideration for the helpless or sorrowful people who came to him.

I once became very tired of the visits of a poor little dwarfish insane man, known in Washington for having expressed his intention to murder Mr. Clay. This little outcast came very often to see and levy upon Mr. Davis for contributions, and I said, "I do not know how you can bear with him, he is so intrusive." He looked troubled and said, "Perhaps if he were agreeable he would not care to call so often — it is a dreadful fate to be distraught and friendless." When the poor man was troublesome to others, and after he had been committed to the insane asylum, my husband sent supplies of letter paper and envelopes to him in order that he might follow his inclination to write long letters to everybody, and Mr. Davis personally answered those addressed to him.

His heart was so tender that he was sometimes betrayed into misplaced sympathy. There was a poor disfigured creature spent by disease, with a talent for mendicancy, who used to sit in front of the War Department and knit stockings winter and summer. Every day the messenger of the Department, Patrick Jordan, was instructed to pay her a small sum of money, and at last he insisted on my sending her a little cushion to prevent her taking cold, though Patrick always declared that she was rich and a "practised outlaw." This messenger became so attached to him and served him so well, that when we left Washington Mr. Davis gave him a handsome gold pencil-case. Some years ago, when Patrick died he left the pencil to be returned. Mr. Davis found much comfort in the loving message which accompanied the pencil, and his eyes were misty with tears as he closed the widow's note.

He abhorred the idea of oppressing the weak so greatly, that it was a difficult matter to keep order with children or servants. If the children were sent from the table for misconduct he called them to kiss him before they went, and our little girl Margaret Howell, who was born about this time, would as soon as she could talk say, "I wish I could see my father, he would let me be bad."

Mr. Davis's chief clerk and good friend, Colonel Archibald Campbell, used to remonstrate with him on the sums he gave to charity. "In anyone else," he said, "it would be a mere yielding to importunity, but after they have left Mr. Davis grieves over their suffering, and it wears him very much."

He had never heard the poem of the "Babes in the Wood," or, strange to say, even the story; probably from his going away from home so early in his childhood he missed the heartrending histories repeated to the "babes" in the nursery. One day when he was ill, I was reading Percy's "Relics," and he asked me to read aloud. Hoping thus to put him to sleep I turned to the "Babes in the Wood" as an oft-told tale and began reading; when midway he grasped my hand and said, "Do stop, I cannot bear it—if it is the truth, it is a cruel thing to perpetuate the story; if it is a fabrication, you may rely on it the man was a rascal who invented such a horror."

And yet to this man, almost weakly merciful, has been attributed the wilful torture of prisoners at Andersonville and in other war prisons!

During Mr. Pierce's Administration the Holy Father, Pius IX., sent his Legate to America, and the Roman Catholic families were all anxious to receive him; notable

among these was Madame de Sartige, the very agreeable wife of Comte de Sartige, the French Minister. Her sister, Mrs. Rice, at a dinner party at the Legation, brought down her chubby baby in its little frilled night dress, and held it smiling up to Monseigneur the Legate, for his blessing. Mrs. Rice was a handsome young creature, and it was a lovely picture as she stood against the pale blue velvet hangings, and presented her little baby to the great dignitary. The baby, her only child, grew to manhood and was Thorn-dike Rice.

In this year, also, the Japanese princes and their suite came to Washington. They were lodged at Willard's Hotel. Their attendants, with their little teapots, braziers, low stools, and other paraphernalia, took up the whole wing of the hotel. The princes were very small, but their dignity of manner impressed all who were introduced to them. They looked as if they could say a world of wise and original things, if the confusion of tongues had never fallen upon mankind.

During Mr. Pierce's administration, Mr. Crampton, who was a well-bred man of some wit, a strong sense of humor, and sincerely liked by the society of Washington, was misled by his zeal for the interest of Great Britain, into conniving at the enlistment of Amer-

icans and foreigners into America, for service in the Crimean war, to fill up the foreign legions authorized by Great Britain at that time. The President's whole Cabinet felt so kindly to him that they examined narrowly the evidence against Mr. Crampton, and would gladly have believed that he had been innocent of violating the neutrality of America toward the contending nations, but were at last unwillingly convinced of the fact. It was a grave matter that caused much acerbity between England and America ; but, nevertheless, Mr. Crampton and three English consuls were given their congé as soon as the facts were undoubtedly established.

The President was personally partial to Mr. Crampton, and it is difficult to perceive how, except from an irresponsible writer, ignorant of the truth, the Administration of President Pierce could have been accused of a desire to derive "popularity," or a new "tenure of office," from involving England and America in a war.

Mr. Crampton was socially very acceptable to the "American Statesman," but the preservation of good faith in our treaties with other countries outweighed personal regard.

Sometimes Captain Rodman came to see Mr. Davis at home ; he was then perfecting his great gun. He was a rather thick-set,

quiet man, of pleasant address and very gentlemanly manner, which was peculiarly acceptable to Mr. Davis. They talked of smooth bores and rifled bores, but I soon gave up trying to understand heavy artillery, as too scientific for an unlearned listener.

Colonel Montgomery Meigs was charged with the extension of the Capitol, and was a frequent visitor. Mr. Davis detailed him for the work, and never had man a more generous, ardent defender than Colonel Meigs found in my husband throughout his whole term in the Cabinet and Senate; for there were many attacks made upon him which Mr. Davis always accepted and defended as personal, and he certainly merited a more grateful memory than General Meigs seemed to have retained. Mr. Davis also gave Colonel Meigs's son an appointment as cadet at West Point, and followed the course of the promising boy with anxious interest. He became an officer in the Federal Army and was killed in the usual course of war, not murdered, as alleged, and our house was very sorrowful when his death was announced; he was "little Johnnie Meigs" to us, a boy we had seen grow up, and for whose success we had many aspirations.

Just before the termination of Mr. Davis's service in the Cabinet our second son, Jeffer-

son, was born, and I was ill unto death for many weeks. This was the "year of the snow," when it drifted against the houses and in the streets to six feet in some places. On F Street it was so deep that Mrs. Henry Wayne, a dear friend and opposite neighbor, could not cross the street without the assistance of men to beat down the snow, and these could not be procured. Mr. Pierce was nearly an hour getting a square and a half, to inquire for me ; he would not send a servant, for, said he, they have no personal interest to urge them on, and would never have made their way this far. He reached our house exhausted, having sunk above his waist several times.

Mr. Seward heard that I was at the point of death, and that the lady, a near neighbor of his, who was nursing me with Mrs. Wayne, could not get a carriage to bring her to our door at the corner of F and Fourteenth Street. Though he did not know us, he had his own fine horses harnessed to a sleigh, and brought Mrs. Hetzel to me—but with broken harness and at some peril. This service introduced him to us, and after all those long years of bitter feuds, I thank him as sincerely as my husband did to the last hour of his life.

Mr. Davis's construction of his stewardship

to the Government was very strict. His office had for him no perquisites. He was much displeased because his messenger carried a parcel for me to a shop, and gravely admonished me. "Patrick's services are for the War Department—the horse and wagon are for Government use; employ another servant if your own are not adequate to your needs." He never sent an order for flowers to the Congressional greenhouse, but considered the garden one established for botanical purposes, to acclimatize useful foreign varieties of trees and shrubs, and not for family use by the officials of the Government. The stationery that I used was bought from our own purse, and when, during his Congressional service, my father desired to have a "Congress knife," then the best made, Mr. Davis gave up his for the session and presented it to my father.

These were laborious but happy years, and bore rich fruit to the Government my husband served, and to the Army where his heart was. He did his best, and the verdict was he did well. He came out with unstained hands, and the whole country knew and acknowledged his purity and efficiency, though an *ex-post facto* indignation, at his death, denied even a slight recognition of his services. Many of the incidents I have related are



trifling, but the high lights of a picture are only perceptible when sustained and accented by the neutral and deep tones. I have therefore striven to show the background of the scenes in which Mr. Davis was a central, I may say a brilliant, figure.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE WINTER OF 1859.

IN 1859 there was an unspoken feeling of avoidance between the political men of the two sections, and even to some extent between such of their families as had previously associated socially together. Unconsciously, all tentative subjects were avoided by the well-bred of both sections; it was only when some "bull in a china shop" galloped over the barriers good breeding had established, that there was anything but the kindest manner apparent. Still the restraint was unpleasant to both sides, and induced a rather ceremonious intercourse. I remember a general start at a dinner party, when Mrs. F., a very well-bred, refined, excellent woman said, "An abolitionist friend of ours." Those of us—at least half of the company—who were from the South felt the neutrality of the feast had not been preserved, and Mr. Davis whispered to his Southern vis-à-vis, "Suppose we were to speak of our barn-burner friends."

In the winter of 1858 Mr. Davis, in the

midst of the heat and excitement of the session, caught a very severe cold which gave him laryngitis; and, before this subsided, the left eye became intensely inflamed. He lay speechless and blind, only able to communicate his thoughts by feeling for the slate and writing them, more or less intelligibly, for four weeks. About this time there was a congress of medical men in Washington, and fortunately our dear friend and family physician, Dr. Thomas Miller, brought the great specialist, Dr. Hayes, of Philadelphia, to see our poor sufferer, though he had been previously ably attended also by Dr. William Stone, of the District. Mr. Davis's anguish was intense—a procedure of the pupil had taken place, and the eye was in imminent danger of bursting. My husband's fortitude and self-control had been so great that no one but I knew how much he suffered, and I only because one day I begged him to try to take nourishment, and he gave only one smothered scream and wrote, "I am in anguish, I cannot." While they examined the eye Mr. Davis sat in the room which had the full morning light streaming through it, that the doctors might see its condition. Dr. Hayes turned to me as I stood holding the emaciated hand that wrung mine at every pang, and said, "I do not see why this eye has not

burst." My husband felt for the slate and wrote, "My wife saved it." All the triumphs of my life were and are concentrated in and excelled by this blessed memory. He sat patiently until the examinations were over, without a word of remonstrance, and was taken nearly fainting back to bed. Dr. Hayes asked me if he was never irritable—and remarked such patience surpasses that of man, it is godlike. There he lay, silent, uncomplaining, anxious to save everyone trouble, and most concerned about my little brother, Jefferson Davis Howell, who was ill with scarlet fever in the room above. As soon as Mr. Davis could speak he insisted on going up to him. When I objected because he had never had the disease, he watched the opportunity of my absence and had himself led upstairs.

On my return he was sitting close by the child, whispering, for he could not speak yet aloud, bear stories to him with his arm under the little man's head, looking as happy as he. This boy was the pride of his later years and the object of his tender affection, until our brother's gallant deeds swept him in to the blessed immortality he so well earned. My brother was baptized, at a time when Mr. Davis was supposed to be mortally wounded in Mexico, Jefferson Davis—and none more

worthy will ever again bear that honored name.

During Mr. Davis's two months confinement to the dark room, men of all politics came to him with a personal affection most charming.

Colonel Edwin V. Sumner, a stout-hearted, tender preux chevalier of the old régime, who, when promotion was to have been expected at Secretary Davis's hands, never made any pretence of leaning toward Southern opinions, would sit in almost total darkness and talk army matters, explorations, Indians, anything by which he thought he could lighten the tedium of these gloomy hours—and often holding Mr. Davis's hand with the tenderness of a woman. The brave old Colonel came to Washington intent upon "having satisfaction" from General Harney, for a discourtesy he thought had been done to him, and asked Colonel Hardie to be his friend in the altercation; and in the course of his conversation with Mr. Davis, which was carried on through me, my husband inquired, "You do not want to fight, of course, but to have this matter explained and the wrong acknowledged." "Well, I do not know," said the old gentleman, "I rather think I prefer fighting." It was, however, happily settled without resort to violent measures.

Colonel Hardie, too, came very often, and sat reading and writing for him when I had driven out for fresh air for an hour.

The English minister at that time was Lord Napier, afterward Governor of India. He, too, used to come like a healthy, tender boy, and brought a reminiscence of sunshine and cheer with him—to Mr. Davis's bedside. He had hardly reached middle age, was a most presentable man in appearance, and his manners were a singular compromise between those of the English and French. Lord Napier was much more approachable than Englishmen in his position generally are, was quick to appreciate every social exigence, and sympathetic as a boy; he had a certain *empressement* of manner like a Frenchman, with a blunt kind of self-respecting English honesty that put finesse to fault. He liked most people, and was too kind-hearted to show the opposite feeling when it existed.

Hundreds still remember his gracious life among us, and he and his lovely wife, one of the most charming and holy women of her day, as well as one of the most accomplished, are enshrined in many hearts as memories that are precious possessions.

The President, Mr. Buchanan, paid Lady Napier a compliment, on her farewell visit before leaving the embassy, that was gratifying

to every woman in society, and evinced his power of saying, upon the moment, as graceful things as Talleyrand. For some unaccountable reason Lord Napier had been recalled suddenly, Mr. Buchanan assured me that he had no idea why. Everyone in society felt the recall a personal grievance, and some of the English legation believed that the President or Secretary of State had intimated that another minister would be more acceptable. So great was the sympathy and regard for the retiring minister, that his friends gave him a large ball at Willard's, which was attended by the good society of all the neighboring cities.

During their last official visit, just as Lord and Lady Napier were making their adieux, the President bent his stately head over Lady Napier's hand and gravely said, "Madam, I have holy writ to substantiate my warning that you are in imminent danger." She looked startled, and he added: 'Beware when all men speak well of you.' No English minister and his wife that I have known were ever so beloved as were Lord and Lady Napier in Washington."

Mr. Seward came for an hour daily, and sometimes oftener, to tell all the "passing show" of the Senate and House of Representatives. One of his favorite expressions

when recounting a debate was, "Your man out-talked ours, you would have liked it, but I didn't." He inquired about every symptom, and one day when our hopes of saving the eye were small, as he went downstairs he suddenly said, with moist eyes—"I could not bear to see him maimed or disfigured, he is a splendid embodiment of manhood, he must not lose his eye." There was an earnest, tender interest in his manner which was unmistakably genuine, and thus I thought of him when he lay wounded unto death, when war had almost obliterated the pleasant memories of years gone by.

It was on one of these visits that he said a most remarkable thing to me. We were speaking of the difficulty men generally had in doing themselves justice, if not cheered on by the attention and sympathy of the audience. Mr. Davis remarked, "I lose much of the vigor of my thoughts when the audience is inattentive or seems 'ill at ease.'" Mr. Seward said, "I do not, it is rather a relief to me to speak to empty benches." I exclaimed, "Then, whom do you impersonate?" "The papers," said he, "I speak to the papers, they have a larger audience than I, and can repeat a thousand times if need be what I want to impress upon the multitude outside; and then there is also the power to pin my antagonists



down to my exact words, which might be disputed if received orally."

Another day he began to talk on the not infrequent topic among us, of slavery. Heartily liking him, and taking a good many liberties of expression with him, I said, "Mr. Seward, how can you make, with a grave face, those piteous appeals for the negro that you did in the Senate; you were too long a schoolmaster in Georgia to believe the things you say?"

He looked at me quizzically, and smilingly answered, "I do not, but these appeals, as you call them, are potent to affect the rank and file of the North." Mr. Davis said, very much shocked at Mr. Seward's answer, "But, Mr. Seward, do you never speak from conviction alone?" "Nev-er," answered he. Mr. Davis raised up his blindfolded head, and with much heat whispered, "As God is my judge, I never spoke from any other motive." Mr. Seward put his arm about him and gently laid down his head, saying, with great tenderness, "I know you do not—I am always sure of it."

After this inscrutable human moral, or immoral, paradox left us, we sat long discussing him with sincere regret, and the hope that he had been making a feigned confidence to amuse us. Mr. Davis grew slowly better, the

unimpaired eye cleared, his throat had been for some time pretty well ; but Mr. Seward came daily until the day Mr. Davis was taken in a close carriage up to address the Senate on an appropriation for the coast survey. Mr. Seward and I both objected earnestly, but Mr. Davis said, "It is for the good of the country and for my boyhood's friend, Dallas Bache, and I must go if it kills me." He left me at the door of the waiting-room with beef-tea and wine in a little basket and went in—carried his point, then came almost fainting home. From that time he began to slide back into his accustomed place for an hour or two each day, and convalescence had its gentle and perfect work. After many weeks Mr. Seward said he might, with the practice of a *raconteur* he had acquired, have grown to the height of a second book nearly equal to Mr. Benton's "Thirty Years in the Senate," had his short digests of its acts not been interrupted by "this unlucky convalescence." I met him looking very bored once on the street, and he stopped and said, "I think Mr. Davis must get sick again, I miss my daily walks." So powerful was the attraction my husband's elevated character and graceful deference for others exercised over the most prejudiced of his antagonists.

Mr. Seward's was a "problematical charac-

ter " full of contradictions, but a very attractive study to us." He was thoroughly sympathetic with human suffering, and would do most unexpected kindnesses to those who would have anticipated the opposite only. He frankly avowed that truth should be held always subsidiary to an end, and if some other statement could subserve that end he made it. He said, again and again, that political strife was a state of war, and in war all stratagems were fair.

## CHAPTER XLII.

### SUMMER OUTING.

MR. DAVIS still continued so weak and had so little appetite that our medical man ordered him to a higher latitude for a month or two, after the adjournment of Congress. So we took our two little children, Margaret and Jefferson, and embarked on a steamer from Baltimore for Boston. It was not a pleasant route, but Mr. Davis always improved at sea, and in this case he became much stronger; until, when we arrived at Boston, he was quite cheerful, and able to dispense with the shade over his eyes for some hours toward twilight. We made connection with the packet steamer at Boston, and sailed out again for Portland harbor.

The Fourth of July fell upon one of the days we were on the ship, and there were prayers read and several speeches. Among those who made addresses was Mr. Davis. He spoke very urgently for peace, and of his devotion to the Constitutional Union. Every one present was stirred by his remarks, and

showed the pleasure he had given by renewed attentions.

We found in Portland a charming summer climate. The excursions on Casco Bay, in the little boats that plied to and fro, were delightful. It was cheering to meet occasionally a pleasure party of several hundred, singing as they sailed some old-fashioned hymn. Even now, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" comes floating over the past from those many voices, and I can almost see the green little islands rise before me that dot Casco Bay.

The people of Portland were as kind as our own could have been, and we met many old acquaintances and made some agreeable new ones. Mrs. Montgomery Blair's family, many of them, lived there; Mrs. Charles Wingate, a bright, cordial, and stately lady of the old régime; the Dearbons, and Mr. Charles Clapp and his agreeable wife and daughter, entertained profusely in their delightful homes built before the embargo. Mrs. Carroll bore a strong resemblance to her cousin, Mrs. Blair, in person and in temperament, and was a near neighbor; she was kind as she was charming and unaffected.

The Honorable Mr. Bradbury and his gentle, kind wife did much to render our visit pleasant. The families of Mr. Muzzy, Col-

onel Little, and Mr. and Mrs. Shepley—he was afterward General Shepley during the war—were very kind, and Mr. Davis remembered them always affectionately. Clam-bakes were arranged for his amusement, and evenings at home for me, at different charming houses in the town; but, most pleasant of all, were the basket parties at Cape Elizabeth, where we sat down to exquisite refreshments, cooked under the directions of the ladies of the city, where each dish was the *chef-d'œuvre* of some good housekeeper. At one of these parties, when we were all seated at the table, a young man with a salver, white apron, and napkin handed me some very good cake, but as I went to take a piece, he upset the whole plate on my shoulders, and then ejaculated, “Oh, I beg your pardon, I am so very awkward.” As I looked into the blushing face, I answered, “It is of no consequence; you have had no practice.” He retired in confusion, and in a few minutes Colonel Shepley brought in my friend, the awkward servant, metamorphosed into a handsome young gentleman, who was profuse in his apologies, but said he had heard Mr. Davis would make a speech after tea, and had asked to be allowed to attend the table rather than miss hearing it. He was there on a fishing excursion. As the evening progressed he added much to

our pleasure by singing, in a beautiful tenor voice, many popular songs. As the dark settled upon us, we drove home, admiring with "awful joy" the splendid comet that flaunted across the sky that summer.

Our little Maggie was a beautiful child, of restless activity, and was the light of her father's eyes. She could not be kept in the old-fashioned garden planted with white, red, and black currants in rows under wide-spreading apple-trees, but whenever it was possible would run off to the neighbors, where her brave little spirited ways always made her welcome. She knew everyone in the neighborhood. One old sea-captain used to tell her wonderful stories upon which she dreamed at night, and the sea-serpent was her familiar demon. Not infrequently I heard people in the street designate me as "little Maggie's mother."

We met in Portland the Rev. Starr King and the Rev. Mr. Stebbins, two great pulpit orators. Mr. Starr King boarded at the same house with us, and his nature and mind combined seemed to me to be a heavenly lyre that was capable of sounding any note in the gamut of joy or sympathy. His eloquence was wondrous, and his cordial grace commended it to us. Mr. Stebbins was also personally most agreeable to Mr. Davis. They

had several long talks upon doctrinal points, and once at a dinner, when the necessity of a formulated creed was urged by my husband, Mr. Stebbins' argued against it, and said, "The creed I set before my congregation is one-third democracy and two-thirds pluck." Mr. Davis used often afterward to cite this speech of a great and good man to show how needful a written code of faith and dogmatic teaching was to Christians. Happy in the society of intellectual men of bright minds and cordial manners, Mr. Davis hourly improved, and found here entire rest and recreation.

We were invited to witness the annual commencement of the Portland Free High School, and there saw the daughter of a dissipated, ignorant washer-woman, pass a wonderful examination. She had forgotten the prescribed method of explaining a problem in differential calculus, and formulated one of her own which answered the purpose, thereby showing her clear understanding of the science rather than of the words of the text books.

As we went home we questioned whether this education, given to her by the State, had not rendered her more sensible, not of the degradation of labor, because education should elevate the dignity of self-help, but



of the squalor of her surroundings, and the inequality with hers of her mother's cultivation ; if this made her more impatient under the daily scenes which mortified and tortured her ; and finally, whether an energetic, cheery working woman had not been spoiled and a learned nondescript substituted for a wholesome, admirable, natural object.

Mr. Davis and I felt such sympathy for the poor child that we seriously considered taking her home with us ; but when we began to cast about for her proper level in our household we found that, as she had the habits of her class, we could not put her on the social plane of our family, and the learning of a scholar rendered her equally unfit for association with servants. So our project was reluctantly abandoned. We never heard what became of her.

As the summer advanced we were invited by Professor Bache to go into tents with him and his party of triangulation on Mount Humpback. We travelled by rail to Bangor, and then took stages to Mount Humpback, spending a night in an old-fashioned inn on the road, much visited by trout fishers. Here was the first man milliner we had met. He was six feet in height, strong in proportion, and an exquisite seamster, as he proved by making a delicate "shirred" satin bonnet. At supper

we had immense dishes of speckled trout caught by the gentlemen anglers who were spending a few weeks there.

At day dawn we heard a voice declaiming, in a most impressive tone, apparently to a crowded meeting. Mr. Davis arose and was seized with such spasmodic attacks of laughter that I joined him and looked into the barnyard. On a small cart, which was standing in the yard, arrayed in a long, figured calico dressing-gown, stood the deft seamster of the night before, with a pan of shelled corn, surrounded by a flock of chickens, turkeys, geese, and ducks, each applauding vociferously while he addressed them with a certain kind of eloquence upon all the topics of the day. As he threw one handful of corn after another out to them, he pleaded, "Consider, weigh, and accept these arguments, be just to one another, your liberties, your lives depend upon it." When he saw Mr. Davis's laughing face at the window he made a deep bow, and said: "Fellow-citizens, allow me to present one more able and more eloquent than myself. Hear ye him." After breakfast we proceeded on our journey, and the oratory of the merry mountebank has ever since remained a cheerful reminiscence often recalled.

We drove nine miles over a most wonderful natural road, called by the country people

“horseback,” elevated over sixty feet and sloping steeply down on each side to the valley which it intersected, like a levee built by Titans. Interspersed throughout the rich valley on either side, in the lush green grass, were the most enormous boulders of granite, many of which looked like Egyptian tombs. As there was no stone of the kind underlying the soil, Professor Bache thought they had been left there by some great flood. The apex on which we drove was only about twenty-five feet wide and nearly uniform throughout its whole length, which stretched to the foot of Mount Humpback. There we found an ox team in waiting hitched to a sled, and we were driven up the side of the mountain, which was so steep that the oxen seemed sometimes to be about to fall back upon us. These were the first oxen I ever saw goaded, and Mr. Davis remonstrated many times against it with the driver.

On a plateau near the top were white tents pitched, one for each of us, an excellent cook, tenderloin steaks from Bangor, vegetables from the neighboring farms, and to all this comfort was added the newest books, and an exquisite and very large musical box which played “Ah, che la morte,” and many other gems of the then new operas of Verdi. Professor Bache, who could not sing a tune, kept

up a pleased murmur of unmusical accompaniment as an expression of his delight. He read aloud at night, and a part of the day we watched him taking observations and enjoyed his clear explanations of his methods. As the sun went down and shone upon the heliotropes, one fixed star after another gleamed out on the distant hill-tops, and our heliotrope answered back again to the dumb messages sent by scientists on every hill. The most noticeable thing to us, who were used to the insect clamor of our summer nights, was the silence on the mountain, and we saw no evidences of insect life. The fall of a leaf could be plainly heard, and it seemed to afford relief to Mr. Davis's exacerbated nerves, after the noise and bustle of Washington, to stay in this secluded place where he could be a lotus eater for a while.

When not engaged in watching the survey work, we looked for the numerous signs of the glacial period, reasoned and wondered over them, picked up "ghost flowers" and found exquisite mosses, sometimes a foot deep, of velvety green. Mr. Davis took our little girl with us on his shoulder, and did all the things so joyful to towns-people on an outing in the country. So health came back to his wasted form, and his sight improved daily. After three happy weeks we returned

to Portland, bade our good friends there farewell, and went down to Boston, intending only to remain a day; but our baby, Jeff, was seized with membranous croup, and became dangerously ill at the Tremont House. Then I saw Boston under its most lovable guise. Every kindness was showered upon us that benevolence and sympathy could suggest. Many ladies called to inquire for him, but as the baby was too ill to be left for a moment, I saw but few of them.

At the darkest hour when we feared the worst, and a foggy night was setting in upon the evening of a raw day, a large, gentle-looking lady knocked at the door in a house dress. She introduced herself as Mrs. Harrison Grey Otis, with whose name we were of course familiar, and said she had come to spend the night and help me to nurse. She kissed the baby and looked over the prescriptions with an experienced eye, offered comforting suggestions, and in fact seemed to diffuse a sense of relief and confidence about her. She said she was having her house painted, and feared the odor would injure the baby, or she would take him home with her. Throughout the long anxious night she sat calm and tender, doing what she could, and this was much. After thirty years this memory is clear and blessed to me, and her name has always been

honored in our household. The Honorable William Appleton, Robert C. Winthrop, Caleb Cushing, Edward Everett, Colonel Charles Green, of *The Post*, Professor Pearce, Sidney Webster, and hundreds of others expressed their sympathy in the kindest manner. The happiest hours I spent in Boston were in Mr. Everett's library, looking over the editions de luxe in which it abounded, and hearing him talk about his travels. These reminiscences of Boston to this day soften all the asperities developed by our bloody war.

Mr. Davis was invited to speak in Faneuil Hall by a committee consisting of the leading men of his party, and was glad of the opportunity to plead with the men of Massachusetts against the encroachments upon the rights and domestic institutions of the South ; and indeed, many of the Democrats who urged him to make the address were anxious upon this point, one of whom was Benjamin F. Butler, then an enthusiastic State rights Democrat, but who, I think, was considered a kind of "ward politician." This speech and Mr. Cushing's address of welcome are here quoted to show the tone Mr. Davis adopted toward them, how frank were his statements, and how exactly like those expressed elsewhere. The Hall was packed and the meeting was enthusiastic. The Honorable Caleb Cushing

introduced Mr. Davis to the assembly in the following speech, copied from the *Boston Morning Post*, October 12, 1858.

The welcome of Mr. Cushing was extremely cordial, cheer upon cheer going up in token of the strong hold that distinguished orator, statesman, jurist, and soldier possesses upon the confidence and affection of the Democrats of this locality.

*Address of Honorable Caleb Cushing.*

“MR. PRESIDENT, FELLOW-CITIZENS: I present myself before you at the instance of your chairman, not so much in order to occupy your time with observations of my own, as to prepare you for the higher gratification which you are to receive from the remarks of the eminent man here present to address you in the course of the evening. I will briefly and only suggest to you such reflections (applause) as are appropriate to that duty. We are assembled here, my friends, at the call of the Democratic ward and county committee of Suffolk, for the purpose of ratifying the nominations made at the late Democratic State convention, the nomination of our distinguished and honored fellow-citizen who has already addressed to you the words of wisdom and of patriotism (applause) ; as also

the nomination of others of our fellow-citizens, whom the welfare and the honor of our commonwealth demands of us to place in power in the stead of the existing authorities of the commonwealth. (Cheers.)

“I would to God it were in our power to say with confidence that it shall be done. (‘It can be done.’) We do say, that in so far as depends upon us it shall be done (cheers); and whatsoever devoted love of our country and our commonwealth, whatsoever of our noble and holy principles, whatsoever desire to vindicate our commonwealth from the stain that has so long rested upon the name, may prompt us to do, that we will do (‘Good, good’), leaving the result to the good providence of God. (Tremendous cheering.)

. . . I say it is our belief that the Democratic party is now recognized as the only existing national party in the United States (cheers); the only constitutional party—the only party which by its present principles is competent to govern these United States (applause); whose principles are based upon the Constitution—the only party with a platform co-extensive with this great Union—this is the great Democratic party. I have heard again and again—remonstrances have been addressed to me more than once—because of the condemnation which Democratic speakers



so continually utter about the unnationality as well as the unconstitutionality of the Republican party.

“ Let us reflect a moment ; let us recall to mind that the honor of the existing organization of this federal administration was by the votes of the people of those United States sustained when James Buchanan was nominated for the Presidency, and that he is a worthy representative of the Democratic party (cheers). Let us reflect also that John C. Frémont was nominated as the candidate of the Republican party.

“ I pray you, gentlemen, to reflect upon the different methods by which these nominations were presented to the people of the United States. On the one hand, there assembled at the Democratic convention at Cincinnati, the delegates of every one of the States in the Union. That convention was national in its constitution, national in its character, national in its purpose, and cordially presented to the suffrages of the people of the United States a national candidate—a candidate of the whole United States ; and that candidate was elected, not by the votes of one section of the Union alone, or another section of the Union alone, but by the concurrent votes of the South and the North.

“ How was it on the other side ? On the

other side there assembled a convention which, by the very tenor of its call, was confined to sixteen of the thirty-one States of the Union—which, by the very tenor of its call, excluded from its councils fifteen of the thirty-one States of the Union—a convention in which appeared the representatives of only sixteen of the States of the Union—nay, I mistake as to the remaining fifteen States of the Union. In their name, pretendedly in their name and their behalf, there appeared one man only, and he a self-appointed delegate by pretension from the State of Maryland. That was the convention which presented John C. Frémont to the people of the United States. I say that was a sectional convention, a sectional nomination, a sectional party ; and no reasonings, no remonstrances, no protestations can discharge the Republican party from the ineffaceable stigma of that sectional convention, that sectional nomination, and that sectional candidate for the suffrages of the United States. (Three cheers.) That party itself has placed upon its back that shirt of Nessus which clings to and stings it to death. (Laughter and applause.) I repeat, then, and say it in confidence and vindication in so far as regards my own belief, I say it in all good spirit toward multitudes of men in this commonwealth of the Whig and Ameri-

can parties in their heretofore organization—I say it to multitudes of men who have been betrayed by the passions of the hour into joining the sectional combination of the Republican party—I say that in the Democratic party, and in that alone, is the tower of strength for the liberties, the position, and the honor of the United States. (Cheering.)

“But why need I indulge in these reflections in proof of my proposition? Gentlemen, we have here this evening the living proof, the visible, tangible, audible, incontestible, immortal proof (great cheering) that the position of the Democratic party in the existing organization of parties is the national, constitutional party of the United States. (Great cheering.) Gentlemen, I ask you to challenge your memories, and look upon the history of the past four years of the United States—and can you point me to a Republican assembly here in the city of Boston or anywhere else—can you point me in the last four years of our history to any occasion on which Faneuil Hall has been crowded to its utmost capacity with a republican assembly in which appeared anyone of those pre-eminent statesmen of the Southern States to honor not merely their States, but these United States? (Great cheering.)

“When, sir, did that ever happen? When, sir, was that a possible fact, morally speak-

ing, that any eminent Southern statesman appears in a Republican assembly in any one of the States of this Union? There never was a Republican assembly—an assembly of the Republican party in fifteen of these States, and I again ask where, in the remaining sixteen States was there ever convened an assembly of the Republican party which, by reason of bigotry, proscriptive bigotry, of un-national hatred of the South, and of determined insult of all Southern statesmen, did not render it an impossible fact that any Southern statesman should thus make his appearance as a member in such Republican convention? (Applause.) You know it is so, gentlemen, and yet have we not a common country? Did those thirteen colonies which, commencing with that combat at Concord and following it with that battle at Bunker's Hill, and pursuing it in every battle-field of this continent, did those thirteen colonies form one country, or thirteen countries? Nay, did they form two countries or one country? I would imagine, when I listen to a Republican speech here, in the State of Massachusetts; I would imagine fifteen States of this Union—our fellow-citizens or fellow-sufferers, our fellow-heroes of the revolution; I would imagine not that they are our countrymen, endeared to us by ties of consanguinity, but that they are

from some foreign country, that they belong to some French or British or Mexican enemies. (Cheers.) There never was a day in which the forces of war were marshalled against the most flagrant abuses toward the United States--there never was a war in which these United States have been engaged--never even in the death-struggle of the Revolution--never in our war for maritime independence--never in our war with France and Mexico--never was there a time when any party in these United States expressed, avowed, proclaimed -- ostentatiously proclaimed--more intense hostility to the British, French, Mexican enemy, than I have heard uttered or proclaimed concerning our fellow-citizens--brothers in the fifteen States of this Union. (Great applause.) It is the glory of the Democratic party that we can assume the burden of our nationality for the Union--that we can make all due sacrifices in order to show our reprobation of sectionalism--that we of the North can sacrifice to the South, from dear attachment to our fellow-citizens of the South, and they in the South, in like manner, meet with us upon that ground in order to show their love for the Federal Union, and at the risk of encountering local prejudices. In the Democratic party alone, as parties are now organized, is this catholic, generous, uni-

versal spirit to be found. (Applause.) I say, then, the Democrats have such a character of constitutionality and of nationality. And now, gentlemen, I have allowed myself, unthinkingly, to be carried beyond my original purpose, I return to it to remind you that here among us is a citizen of the Southern States, eloquent among the eloquent in debate, wise among the wisest in council, and brave among the bravest in the battle-field (tremendous cheering); a citizen of a Southern State ('good, good') who knows that he can associate with you, the representatives of the democracy and the nationality of Massachusetts; that he can associate with you on equal footing with the fellow-citizens and common members of these United States.

"My friends, there are those here present, and in fact there is no one here present of whom it cannot be said, that in memory and admiration, at least, and if not in the actual fact, yet in proud and bounding memory, they have been able to tread the glorious tracks of the victorious achievements of Jefferson Davis on the fields of Monterey and Buena Vista (great cheering); and all have heard or have read the accents of eloquence addressed by him to the Senate of the United States (cheers); and there is one, at least, who from his own personal observation can bear witness

to the fact of the surpassing wisdom of Jefferson Davis in the administration of the government of the United States. (Cheers.) Such a man, fellow-citizens, you are this evening to hear, and to hear as a beautiful illustration of the working of our republican institutions of these United States—of the republican institutions which in our own country, our own republic, as in the old republics of Athens and of Rome, exhibit the same combinations of the highest military and civic qualities in the same person.

“It must naturally be so; for, in a republic every citizen is a soldier and every soldier is a citizen. Not in these United States, on the occurrence of foreign war, is that spectacle exhibited which we have so recently seen in our mother country—of the administration of the country going abroad begging and stealing soldiers throughout Europe and America. (Laughter and applause.) No; and while I ask you, my friends, to ponder this fact in relation to that disastrous struggle of giants which so recently occurred in our day—the Crimean war—I ask you whether any English gentleman, any member of the British House of Commons, any member of the British House of Peers, abandoned his easy honors at home, and went into the country among his friends, tenants, and fellow-countrymen,

volunteering there to raise troops for the service of England in that hour of her peril? Did any such fact occur? ('No.') No, but here in these United States we had examples, and illustrious ones, of the fact that men eminent in their place in Congress abandoned their stations and their honors to go among fellow-citizens of their own States and there to raise troops with which to vindicate the honor and the flag of their country. Of such men was Jefferson Davis. (Cheers.)

"There is now living one military man of prominent distinction in the public eye of England and the United States. I mean Sir Colin Campbell, now Lord Clyde, of Clydesdale. He deserves the distinction he enjoys, for he has redeemed the British flag on the ensanguined, burning plains of India. He has restored the glory of the British name in Asia. I honor him; Scotland, England, Wales, and Ireland are ours; for their counties as well as their countries; and their poets, orators, and statesmen, and their generals belong to our history as well as to theirs. I will never disavow Henry V. on the plains of Agincourt; never Oliver Cromwell on the fields of Marston Moor and Naseby; never Sarsfield on the banks of the Boyne. The glories and honors of Sir Colin Campbell are the glories of the British race



and of the races of Great Britain and Ireland from whom we are descended. But what gained Sir Colin Campbell the opportunity to achieve those glorious results in India? Remember that, and let us see what it was. On one of those bloody battles fought by the British before the Fortress of Sebastopol—in the midst of the perils, the most perilous of all the battle-fields England ever encountered in Europe, in one of the bloody charges of the Russian cavalry there was an officer, a man who felt and possessed sufficient confidence in the troops he commanded and in the authority of his own voice and example, received that charge, not in the ordinary, commonplace, and accustomed manner, by forming his troops into a hollow square, and thus arresting the charge, but by forming into two diverging lines, and thus receiving upon the rifles of his Highland men the charge of the Russian cavalry and repelling it. How all England rang with the glory of that achievement! How the general voice of England placed upon the brows of Sir Colin Campbell the laurels of the future mastership of victory for the arms of England! And well they might do so. But who originated that movement? who set the example of that gallant operation? who, but Colonel Jefferson Davis, of the First Mississippi regiment, on the fields

of Buena Vista? (Tremendous applause.) He was justly entitled to the applause of the restorer of victory to the arms of the Union. Gentlemen, in our country, in this day, such a man, such a master of the art of war, so daring in the field; such a man may not only aspire to the highest places in the executive government of the Union, but such a man may acquire what nowhere else since the days of Cimon and Miltiades, of the Cincinnati and the Cornelii, of Athens and of Rome, has been done by the human race—the combination of eminent powers, of intellectual cultivation, and of eloquence, with the practical qualities of a statesman and general. (Tremendous cheering.)

“But, gentlemen, I am again betrayed beyond my purpose. Sir (addressing General Davis), we welcome you to the commonwealth of Massachusetts. (Six cheers.) You may not find here the ardent skies of your own sunny South, but you will find as ardent hearts, as warm and generous hands, to welcome you to our commonwealth. (Renewed cheering.) We welcome you to the City of Boston, and you have already experienced how open-hearted, how generous, how free from all possible taint of sectional thought is the hospitality and cordiality of the City of Boston. (Renewed cheering.) We welcome

you to Faneuil Hall. Many an eloquent voice has in all times resounded from the walls of Faneuil Hall. It is said that no voice is uttered by man in this air we breathe but enters into that air. It continues there immortal as the portion of the universe into which it has passed. If it be so, how instinct is Faneuil Hall with the voice of the great, good, and glorious of past generations, and of our own, whose voices have echoed through its walls, whose eloquent words have thrilled the hearts of hearers as if a pointed sword were passing them through and through. (Great cheers.) Here, Adams aroused his countrymen in the war of independence, and Webster (cheers) invoked them almost with the dying breath of his body, invoked them with that voice of majesty and power which he alone possessed, invoked them to a Union between the North and South. (Great applause.)

“Aye, sir, and who, if he were here present from those blessed abodes on high, from which he looks down upon us, would congratulate us for this scene. First, and above all, because his large heart would have appreciated the spectacle of a statesman, eminent among the most eminent of the Southern States, here addressing an assembly of the people in the City of Boston. (Tremendous cheering.) Because, in the second place, he

would have remembered that, though divided from you by party relations, that, in one of the critical hours of his fame and his honor, your voice was not wanting for his vindication in the Congress of the United States. (' Good,' ' Good,' and cheers.)

" Sir, again I say, we welcome you to Faneuil Hall. And now, my fellow-citizens, I will withdraw myself and present to you the Hon. Jefferson Davis." (Three cheers.)

As Mr. Davis took the stand, a scene of enthusiasm was presented which defies description. Those who held seats in the galleries rose *en masse*, and joined with those standing on the lower floor in extending a cordial, very cordial greeting to the honored guest from Mississippi.

*Address of Jefferson Davis at Faneuil Hall,  
Boston, October 12, 1858.*

"COUNTRYMEN, BRETHREN, AND DEMOCRATS: Most happy am I to meet you, and to have received here renewed assurance of that which I have so long believed, that the pulsation of the Democratic heart is the same in every parallel of latitude, on every meridian of longitude, throughout the United States. It required not this to confirm me in a belief I have so long and so happily enjoyed. Your

own great statesman (the Hon. Caleb Cushing) who has introduced me to this assembly, has been too long associated with me, too nearly connected—we have labored too many hours, until one day ran into another, in the cause of our country—for me to fail to understand that a Massachusetts Democrat has a heart as wide as the Union, and that its pulsations always beat for the liberty and happiness of his country. Neither could I be unaware that such was the sentiment of the Democracy of New England, for it was my fortune lately to serve under a President drawn from the neighboring State of New Hampshire, and I know that he spoke the language of his heart, for I learned it in four years of intimate relations with him, when he said he knew ‘no North, no South, no East, no West, but sacred maintenance of the common bond and true devotion to the common brotherhood.’ Never, sir, in the past history of our country, never, I add, in its future destiny, however bright it may be, did or will a man of higher and purer patriotism, a man more devoted to the common weal of his country, hold the helm of our great ship of state than Franklin Pierce.

“I have heard the resolutions read and approved by this meeting; I have heard the address of your candidate for Governor; and

these, added to the address of my old and intimate friend, General Cushing, bear to me fresh testimony, which I shall be happy to carry away with me, that the Democracy, in the language of your own glorious Webster, 'still lives;' lives, not as his great spirit did when it hung 'twixt life and death, like a star upon the horizon's verge, but lives like the germ that is shooting upward; like the sapling that is growing to a mighty tree, and I trust it may redeem Massachusetts to her glorious place in the Union, when she led the van of the defenders of States rights.

"When I see Faneuil Hall thus thronged it reminds me of another meeting when it was found too small to contain the assembly that met here, on the call of the people, to know what should be done in relation to the tea-tax, and when, Faneuil Hall being too small, they went to the old South Church, which still stands a monument of your early day. I hope the time will soon come when many Democratic meetings in Boston will be too large for Faneuil Hall. I am welcomed to this hall, so venerable for all the associations of our early history; to this hall of which you are so justly proud, and the memories of which are part of the inheritance of every American citizen; and I felt, as I looked upon it, and remembered how many voices

of patriotic fervor have filled it; how here the first movement originated from which the Revolution sprang; how here began the system of town meetings, and free discussion—that, though my theme was more humble than theirs, as befitted my humbler powers, I had enough to warn me that I was assuming much to speak in this sacred chamber. But, when I heard your distinguished orator say that words uttered here could never die, that they lived and became a part of the circumambient air, I felt a hesitation which increases upon me with the remembrance of his expressions. But, if those voices which breathed the first impulse into colonies—now the United States—to proclaim independence, and to unite for resistance against the power of the mother-country; if those voices live here still, how must they fare who come here to preach treason to the Constitution and to assail the union of these States? It would seem that their criminal hearts would fear that those voices, so long slumbering, would break silence, that those forms which hang upon these walls behind me might come forth, and that the sabres so long sheathed would leap from their scabbards to drive from this sacred temple those who desecrate it as did the money-changers who sold doves in the temple of the living God.

“Here you have, to remind you, and to remind all who enter this hall, the portraits of those men who are dear to every lover of liberty, and part and parcel of the memory of every American citizen; and highest among them all I see you have placed Samuel Adams and John Hancock. You have placed them the highest, and properly; for they were two, the only two, excepted from the proclamation of mercy, when Governor Gage issued his anathema against them and against their fellow-patriots. These men, thus excepted from the saving grace of the crown, now occupy the highest places in Faneuil Hall, and thus seem to be the highest in the reverence of the people of Boston. This is one of the instances in which we find tradition so much more reliable than history; for tradition has borne the name of Samuel Adams to the remotest of the colonies, and the new States formed out of what was territory of the old colonies; and there it is a name as sacred among us as it is among you.

“We all remember how early he saw the necessity of Community Independence. How, through the dim mists of the future, and in advance of his day, he looked forward to the proclamation of the independence of Massachusetts; how he steadily strove, through good report and evil report, with a great un-



wavering heart, whether in the midst of his fellow-citizens, cheered by their voices, or communing with his own heart, when driven from his home, his eyes were still fixed upon his first, last hope, the community independence of Massachusetts. Always a commanding figure, we see him at a later period, the leader in the correspondence which waked the feelings of the other colonies to united fraternal association—the people of Massachusetts with the people of the other colonies ; there we see his letters acknowledging the receipt of rice of South Carolina, and the money of New York and Pennsylvania—all these poured in to relieve Boston of the sufferings inflicted upon her when the port was closed by the despotism of the British Crown—we see the beginning of that which insured the co-operation of the colonies throughout the desperate struggle of the Revolution. And we there see that which, if the present generation be true to the memory of their sires, to the memory of the noble men from whom they descended, will perpetuate for them that spirit of fraternity in which the Union began. But it is not here alone, nor in reminiscences connected with the objects which present themselves within this hall, that the people of Boston have much to excite their patriotism and carry them back to the

great principles of the Revolutionary struggle. Where will you go and not meet some monument to inspire such sentiments? Go to Lexington and Concord, where sixty brave countrymen came with their fowling-pieces to oppose six hundred veterans—where they forced those veterans back, pursuing them on the road, fighting from every barn, and bush, and stock, and stone, till they drove them retreating to the ships from which they went forth. And there stand those monuments of your early patriotism, Breed's and Bunker's Hills, whose soil drank the martyr-blood of men who lived for their country and died for mankind! Can it be that any of you should tread that soil and forget the great purposes for which these men died? While, on the other side, rise the heights of Dorchester, where once stood the encampment of the Virginian, the man who came here, and did not ask, is this a town of Virginia? but, is this a town of my brethren? The steady courage and cautious wisdom of Washington availed to drive the British troops out from the city which they had so confidently held. Here, too, you find where once the old Liberty Tree, connected with so many of your memories, grew. You ask your legend, and learn that it was cut down for firewood by British soldiers, as some of your meeting-

houses were destroyed ; they burned the old tree, and it warmed the soldiers long enough to leave town, and, had they burned it a little longer, its light would have shown Washington and his followers where their enemies were.

“ But they are gone, and never again shall a hostile foot set its imprint upon your soil. Your harbor is being fortified, to prevent an unexpected attack on your city by a hostile fleet. But woe to the enemy whose fleet shall bear him to your shores to set his footprint upon your soil ; he goes to a prison or to a grave. American fortifications are not built from any fear of invasion, they are intended to guard points where marine attacks can be made ; and, for the rest, the hearts of Americans are our ramparts.

“ But, my friends, it is not merely in these associations, so connected with the honorable pride of Massachusetts, that one who visits Boston finds much for gratification, hope, and instruction. If I were selecting a place where the advocate of strict construction, the extreme expounder of democratic State-rights doctrine should go for his texts, I would send him into the collections of your historical associations. Instead of going to Boston as a place where only consolidation would be found, he would find written, in letters of liv-

ing light, that sacred creed of State-rights which has been miscalled the ultra opinions of the South ; he could find among your early records that this Faneuil Hall, the property of the town at the time when Massachusetts was under a colonial government, administered by a man appointed by the British crown, guarded by British soldiers, was refused to a British Governor in which to hold a British festival, because he was going to bring with him the agents for collecting, and the naval officers sent here to enforce, an oppressive tax upon your commonwealth. Such was the proud spirit of independence manifested even in your colonial history. Such is the great foundation-stone on which may be erected an eternal monument of State-rights. And so, in an early period of our country, you find Massachusetts leading the movements, prominent of all the States, in the assertion of that doctrine which has been recently so much belied. Having achieved your independence, having passed through the Confederation, you assented to the formation of our present constitutional Union. You did not surrender your sovereignty. Your fathers had sacrificed too much to claim, as a reward of their toil, merely that they should have a change of masters ; and a change of masters it would have been had Massachu-

setts surrendered her State sovereignty to the Central Government, and consented that that Central Government should have the power to coerce a State. But, if this power does not exist, if this sovereignty has not been surrendered, then, who can deny the words of soberness and truth spoken by your candidate this evening, when he has pleaded to you the cause of State independence, and the right of every community to be judge of its own domestic affairs? This is all we have ever asked—we of the South, I mean—for I stand before you as one of those who have always been called the ultra men of the South, and I speak, therefore, for that class ; and I tell you that your candidate for Governor has uttered to-night everything which we have claimed as a principle for our protection. And I have found the same condition of things in the neighboring State of Maine. I have found that the Democrats there asserted the same broad constitutional principle for which we have been contending, by which we are willing to live, for which we are willing to die.

“ In this state of the case, my friends, why is the country agitated? The old controversies have passed away, or they have subsided, and have been covered up by one dark pall of sombre hue, which increases

with every passing year. Why is it, then, I say, that you are thus agitated in relation to the domestic affairs of other communities? Why is it that the peace of the country is disturbed in order that one people may judge of what another people may do? Is there any political power to authorize such interference? If so, where is it? You did not surrender your sovereignty. You gave to the Federal Government certain functions. It was your agent, created for specified purposes. It can do nothing save that which you have given it power to perform. Where is the grant? Has it a right to determine what shall be property? Surely not; that belongs to every community to decide for itself; you judge in your case—every other State must judge in its case. The Federal Government has no power to destroy property. Do you pay taxes, then, to an agent, that he may destroy your property? Do you support him for that purpose? It is an absurdity on the face of it. To ask the question is to answer it. The Government is instituted to protect, not to destroy, property. And, in the abundance of caution, your fathers provided that the Federal Government should not take private property for its own use unless by making due compensation therefor. It is prohibited from attempting to destroy property.

One of its great purposes was protection to the States. Whenever that power is made a source of danger, we destroy the purpose for which the Government was formed. Why, then, have you agitators? With pharisaical pretension it is sometimes said it is a moral obligation to agitate, and I suppose they are going through a sort of vicarious repentance for other men's sins. With all due allowance for their zeal, we ask, how do they decide that it is a sin? By what standard do they measure it? Not the Constitution: the Constitution recognizes the property in slaves in many forms, and imposes obligations in connection with that recognition. Not the Bible; that justifies it. Not the good of society; for, if they go where it exists, they find that society recognizes it as good. What, then, is their standard? The good of mankind? Is that seen in the diminished resources of the country? Is that seen in the diminished comfort of the world? Or is not the reverse exhibited? Is there, in the cause of Christianity, a motive for the prohibition of the system which is the only agency through which Christianity has reached that inferior race, the only means by which they have been civilized and elevated? Or is their piety manifested in denunciation of their brethren, who are deterred from

answering their denunciation only by the contempt which they feel for a mere brawler, who intends to end his brawling only in empty words?

“What, my friends, must be the consequences? Good, or evil? They have been evil, and evil they must be only to the end. Not one particle of good has been done to any man, of any color, by this agitation. It has been insidiously working the purpose of sedition, for the destruction of the Union on which our hopes of future greatness depend.

“On the one side, then, you see agitation tending slowly and steadily to that separation of States, which, if you have any hope connected with the liberty of mankind; if you have any national pride connected with making your country the greatest upon the face of the earth; if you have any sacred regard for the obligations which the deeds and the blood of your fathers entailed upon you, that hope should prompt you to reject anything that would tend to destroy the result of that experiment which they left it to you to conclude and perpetuate. On the other hand, if each community, in accordance with the principles of our Government, should regard its domestic interests as a part of the common whole, and struggle for the benefit of all, this would steadily lead us to fraternity, to



unity, to co-operation, to the increase of our happiness and the extension of the benefits of our useful example over mankind. The flag of the Union, whose stars have already more than doubled their original number, with its ample folds may wave, the recognized flag of every State, or the recognized protector of every State upon the Continent of America.

“ In connection with the view which I have presented of the early idea of community independence, I will add the very striking fact that one of the colonies, about the time that they had resolved to unite for the purpose of achieving their independence, addressed the Colonial Congress to know in what condition it would be in the interval between the separation from the Government of Great Britain and the establishment of a government on this continent. The answer of the Colonial Congress was exactly what might have been expected ; exactly what State-rights Democracy would answer to-day to such an inquiry, that they ‘ had nothing to do with it. ’ If such sentiment had continued, if it had governed in every State, if representatives had been chosen upon it, then your halls of Federal legislation would not have been disturbed about the question of the domestic institutions of the different States. The peace of the country would not have been hazarded by the

arraignment of the family relations of people over whom the Government has no control. If in harmony working together, with co-intelligence for the conservation of the interests of the country ; if protection to the States and the other great ends for which the Government was established, had been the aim and united effort of all—what effects would not have been produced? As our Government increases in expansion it would increase in its beneficent effect upon the people ; we should, as we grow in power and prosperity, also grow in fraternity, and it would be no longer a wonder to see a man coming from a Southern State to address a Democratic audience in Boston.

“ But I have referred to the fact that Massachusetts stood pre-eminently forward among those who asserted community independence ; and this reminds me of another incident. President Washington visited Boston when John Hancock was Governor, and Hancock refused to call upon the President, because he contended that any man who came within the limits of Massachusetts must yield rank and precedence to the Governor of the State. He eventually only surrendered the point on account of his personal regard and respect for the character of George Washington. I honor him for this, and value it as one of the early

testimonies in favor of State-rights. I wish all our Governors had the same regard for the dignity of the State as had the great and glorious John Hancock.

“In the beginning the founders of this Government were true democratic State-rights men. Democracy was State-rights, and State-rights was democracy, and it is so to-day. Your resolutions breathe it. The Declaration of Independence embodied the sentiments which had lived in the hearts of the country for many years before its formal assertion. Our fathers asserted the great principle—the right of the people to choose their own government—and that government rested upon the consent of the governed. In every form of expression it uttered the same idea, community independence and the dependence of the Union upon the communities of which it consisted. It was an American declaration of the unalienable rights of man ; it was a general truth, and I wish it were accepted by all men. But I have said that this State sovereignty—this community independence—has never been surrendered, and that there is no power in the Federal Government to coerce a State. Will anyone ask me, then, how a State is to be held to the fulfilment of its obligations? My answer is, by its honor. The obligation is the more sacred to observe every feature

of the compact, because there is no power to enforce it. The great error of the Confederation was, that it attempted to act upon the States. It was found impracticable, and our present form of government was adopted, which acts upon individuals, and is not designed to act upon States. The question of State coercion was raised in the Convention which framed the Constitution, and, after discussion, the proposition to give power to the General Government to enforce against any State obedience to the laws was rejected. It is upon the ground that a State cannot be coerced that observance of the compact is a sacred obligation. It was upon this principle that our fathers depended for the perpetuity of a fraternal Union, and for the security of the rights that the Constitution was designed to preserve. The fugitive slave compact in the Constitution of the United States implied that the States should fulfil it voluntarily. They expected the States to legislate so as to secure the rendition of fugitives; and in 1778 it was a matter of complaint that the Spanish colony of Florida did not restore fugitive negroes from the United States who escaped into that colony, and a committee, composed of Hamilton, of New York, Sedgwick, of Massachusetts, and Mason, of Virginia, reported resolutions in the Congress, instructing

the Secretary of Foreign Affairs to address the *chargé d'affaires* at Madrid to apply to his Majesty of Spain to issue orders to his governors to compel them to secure the rendition of fugitive negroes. This was the sentiment of the committee, and they added, also, that the States would return any slaves from Florida who might escape into their limits.

“ When the constitutional obligation was imposed, who could have doubted that every State, faithful to its obligations, would comply with the requirements of the Constitution, and waive all questions as to whether the institution should or should not exist in another community over which they had no control? Congress was at last forced to legislate on the subject, and they have continued up to a recent period to legislate, and this has been one of the causes by which you have been disturbed. You have been called upon to make war against a law which need never to have been enacted, if each State had done the duty which she was called upon by the Constitution to perform.

“ Gentlemen, this presents one phase of agitation—negro agitation; there is another and graver question, it is in relation to prohibition by Congress of the introduction of slave property into the Territories. What power does Congress possess in this connection?

Has it the right to say what shall be property anywhere? If it has, from what clause of the Constitution does it derive that power? Have other States the power to prescribe the condition upon which a citizen of another State shall enter upon and enjoy territory—common property of all? Clearly not. Shall the inhabitants who first go into territory deprive any citizen of the United States of those rights which belong to him as an equal owner of the soil? Certainly not. Sovereign jurisdiction can only pass to those inhabitants when the States, the owners of the territory, shall recognize their right to become an equal member of the Union. Until then, the Constitution and the laws of the Union must be the rule governing within the limits of a Territory.

“The Constitution recognizes all property, and gives equal privileges to every citizen of the States; and it would be a violation of its fundamental principles to attempt any discrimination.

“There is nothing of truth or justice with which to sustain this agitation, or ground for it, unless that it be it is a very good bridge over which to pass into office; a little stock of trade in politics built up to aid men who are missionaries staying at home; reformers of things which they do not go to learn; preachers without a congregation;

overseers without laborers and without wages ; war-horses who snuff the battle afar off and cry : ‘ Aha, aha ! I am afar off ! ’

“ Thus it is that the peace of the Union is disturbed ; thus it is that brother is arrayed against brother ; thus it is that the people come to consider, not how they can promote each other’s interests, but how they may successfully war upon them. And among the things most odious to my mind is to find a man who enters upon a public office under the sanction of the Constitution, and taking an oath to support the Constitution—the compact between the States binding each for the common defence and general welfare of the other—and retaining to himself a mental reservation that he will war upon the institutions and the property of any of the States of the Union. It is a crime too low to characterize as it deserves before this assembly. It is one which would disgrace a gentleman—one which a man with self-respect would never commit. To swear that he will support the Constitution, to take an office which belongs in many of its relations to all the States, and to use it as a means of injuring a portion of the States of whom he is thus an agent, is treason to everything that is honorable in man. It is the base and cowardly attack of him who gains the confidence of another in order that

he may wound him. But I have often heard it argued, and I have seen it published ; I have seen a petition that was circulated for signers, announcing that there was an incompatibility between the different sections of the Union ; that it had been tried long enough, and that they must get rid of those sections in which the curse of slavery existed. Ah, those sages, so much wiser than our fathers, have found out that there is incompatibility in that which existed when the Union was formed. They have found an incompatibility inconsistent with union in that which existed when South Carolina sent her rice to Boston, and Maryland and Pennsylvania and New York brought in their funds for her relief. The fact is that from that day to this, the difference between the people of the colonies has been steadily diminishing, and the possible advantages of the Union in no small degree augmented. The variety of product of soil and of climate has been multiplied, both by the expansion of our country and by the introduction of new tropical products not cultivated at that time ; so that every motive to union which your fathers had, in a diversity which should give prosperity to the country, exists in a higher degree to-day than when this Union was formed, and this diversity is fundamental to the prosper-



ity of the people of the several sections of the country.

“ It is however, to-day, in sentiment and interest, less than on the day when the Declaration of Independence was made. Diversity there is—diversity of character—but it is not of that extreme kind which proves incompatibility; for your Massachusetts man, when he comes into Mississippi, adopts our opinions and our institutions, and frequently becomes the most extreme man among us. As our country has extended, as new products have been introduced into it, this Union and the free trade that belongs to it have been of increasing value. And I say, moreover, that it is not an unfortunate circumstance that this diversity of pursuit and character still remains. Originally it sprang in no small degree from natural causes. Massachusetts became a manufacturing and commercial State because of her fine harbors, because of her water-power, making its last leap into the sea, so that the ship of commerce brought the staple to the manufacturing power. This made you a commercial and a manufacturing people. In the Southern States great plains interpose between the last leaps of the streams and the sea. These plains were cultivated in staple crops, and the sea brought their products to your streams to

be manufactured. This was the first beginning of the differences.

“Then your longer and more severe winters, your soil not so favorable for agriculture, in a degree kept you a manufacturing and a commercial people. Even after the cause had passed away—after railroads had been built—after the steam-engine had become a motive power for a large part of manufacturing machinery, the natural causes from which your people obtained a manufacturing ascendancy and ours became chiefly agriculturists, continued to act in a considerable measure to preserve that relation.

“Your interest is to remain a manufacturing, and ours to remain an agricultural, people. Your prosperity, then, is to receive our staple and to manufacture it, and ours to sell it to you and buy the manufactured goods. This is an interweaving of interests which makes us all the richer and happier.

“But this accursed agitation, this intermeddling with the affairs of other people, is that alone which will promote a desire in the mind of anyone to separate these great and glorious States. The seeds of dissension may be sown by invidious reflections. Men may be goaded by the constant attempts to infringe upon rights and to disturb tranquillity, and in the resentment which follows it is not

possible to tell how far the wave may rush. I therefore plead to you now to arrest fanaticism which has been evil in the beginning, and must be evil in the end. You may not have the numerical power requisite, and those at a distance may not understand how many of you there are desirous to put a stop to the course of this agitation. For me, I have learned since I have been in New England the vast mass of true State-rights Democrats to be found within its limits—though not represented in the halls of Congress. And if it comes to the worst—if, availing themselves of a majority in the two Houses of Congress, they should attempt to trample upon the Constitution; if they should attempt to violate the rights of the States; if they should attempt to infringe upon our equality in the Union—I believe that even in Massachusetts, though it has not had a representative in Congress for many a day, the State-rights Democracy, in whose breasts beats the spirit of the Revolution, can and will whip the black Republicans. I trust we shall never be thus purified, as it were, by fire; but that the peaceful progressive revolution of the ballot-box will answer all the glorious purposes of the Constitution and the Union. And I marked that the distinguished orator and statesman who preceded me, in addressing

you, used the words "national" and "constitutional" in such relation to each other as to show that in his mind the one was a synonym of the other. I say so: we became national by the constitutional, the bond for uniting the States, and national and constitutional are convertible terms.

"Your candidate for the high office of Governor, whom I have been once or twice on the point of calling Governor, and whom I hope I may be able soon to call so, in his remarks to you has presented the same idea in another form. And well may Massachusetts orators, without even perceiving what they are saying, utter sentiments which lie at the foundation of your colonial as well as your subsequent political history, which existed in Massachusetts before the Revolution, and have existed ever since, whenever the true spirit which comes down from the revolutionary sires has swelled and found utterance within her limits.

"It has been not only, my friends, in this increasing and mutual dependence of interest that we have found new ties to you. Those bonds are both material and mental. Every improvement or invention, every construction of a railroad, has formed a new reason for our being one; every new invention, whether it has been in arts or science, in war or in

manufactures, has constituted for us a new bond and a new sentiment holding us together.

“ Why, then, I would ask, do we see these lengthened shadows which follow in the course of our political history? Is it because our sun is declining to the horizon? Are they the shadows of evening, or are they, as I hopefully believe, but the mists which are exhaled by the sun as it rises, but which are to be dispersed by its meridian of glory? Are they but the little evanishing clouds that flit between the people and the great objects for which the Constitution was established? I hopefully look toward the reaction which will establish the fact that our sun is still in the ascendant, that the cloud which has so long covered our political horizon is to be dispersed, that we are not again to be divided on parallels of latitude and about the domestic institutions of States—a sectional attack on the prosperity and tranquillity of a nation—but only by differences in opinion upon measures of expediency, upon questions of relative interest, by discussion as to the powers of the States and the rights of the States, and the powers of the Federal Government; such discussion as is commemorated in this picture of your own great and glorious Webster, when he specially addressed our best, most

tried, and greatest man, the pure and incorruptible Calhoun, represented as intently listening to catch the accents of eloquence that fell from his lips. Those giants strove each for his conviction, not against a section, not against each other; they stood to each other in the relation of personal affection and esteem, and never did I see Mr. Webster so agitated, never did I hear his voice falter, as when he delivered the eulogy on John C. Calhoun.

“ But allusion was made to my own connection with your great and favorite departed statesman. Of that I will only say, on this occasion, that very early in my congressional life Mr. Webster was arraigned for an offence which affected him most deeply. He was no accountant, and all knew that. He was arraigned on a pecuniary charge—the misapplication of what is known as the secret-service fund—and I was one of the committee that had to investigate the charge. I endeavored to do justice. I endeavored to examine the evidence with a view to ascertain the truth. It is true I remembered that he was an eminent American statesman. It is true that, as an American, I hoped he would come out without a stain upon his garments. But I entered upon the investigation to find the truth, and to do justice. The result was he was ac-

quitted of every charge that was made against him, and it was equally my pride and my pleasure to vindicate him in every form which lay within my power. No one who knew Daniel Webster could have believed that he would ever ask whether a charge was made against a Massachusetts man or a Mississippian. No ; it belonged to a lower, to a later, and, I trust, a shorter-lived, race of statesmen, who measure all facts by considerations of latitude and longitude.

“ I honor that sentiment which makes us oftentimes too confident, and to despise too much the danger of that agitation which disturbs the peace of the country. I respect that feeling which regards the Union as too strong to be broken. But, at the same time, in sober judgment, it will not do to treat too lightly the danger which has existed and still exists. I have heard our Constitution and Union compared to the granite shores which face the sea, and, dashing back the foam of the waves, stand unmoved by their fury. Now I accept the simile : and I have stood upon the shore, and I have seen the waves of the sea dash upon the granite of your own shores which frowns over the ocean, have seen the spray thrown back from the cliffs. But, when the tide had ebbed, I saw that the rock was seamed and worn ; and when the tide

was low, the pieces that had been riven from the granite rock were lying at its base.

“ And thus the waves of sectional agitation are dashing themselves against the granite patriotism of the land. But even that must show the seams and scars of the conflict. Sectional hostility will follow. The danger lies at your door, and it is time to arrest it. Too long have we allowed this influence to progress. It is time that men should go back to the first foundation of our institutions. They should drink the waters of the fountain at the source of our colonial and early history.

“ You, men of Boston, go to the street where the massacre occurred in 1770. There you should learn how your fathers strove for community rights. And near the same spot you should learn how proudly the delegation of Democracy came to demand the removal of the troops from Boston, and how the venerable Samuel Adams stood asserting the rights of Democracy, dauntless as Hampden, clear and eloquent as Sidney; and how they drove out the myrmidons who had trampled on the rights of the people.

“ All over our country, these monuments, instructive to the present generation, of what our fathers did, are to be found. In the library of your association for the collection of



your early history, I found a letter descriptive of the reading of the church service to his army by General Washington, during one of those winters when the army was ill-clad and without shoes, when he built a little log-cabin for a meeting-house, and there, reading the service to them, his sight failed him; he put on his glasses, and, with emotion which manifested the reality of his feelings, said, 'I have grown gray in serving my country, and now I am growing blind.'

"By the aid of your records you may call before you the day when the delegation of the army of the Democracy of Boston demanded compliance with its requirements for the removal of the troops. A painfully thrilling case will be found in the heroic conduct of your fathers' friends, the patriots in Charleston, S. C. The prisoners were put upon the hulks, where the small-pox existed, and where they were brought on shore to stay the progress of the infection, and were offered, if they would enlist in his Majesty's service, release from all their sufferings present and prospective; while, if they would not, the rations would be taken from their families, and they would be sent back to the hulks and again exposed to the infection. Emaciated as they were, with the prospect of being returned to confinement, and their families turned out into

the streets, the spirit of independence, the devotion to liberty, was so supreme in their breasts, that they gave one loud huzza for General Washington, and went to meet death in their loathsome prison. From these glorious recollections, from the emotions which they create, when the sacrifices of those who gave you the heritage of liberty are read in your early history, the eye is directed to our present condition. Mark the prosperity, the growth, the honorable career of your country under the voluntary union of independent States. I do not envy the heart of that American whose pulse does not beat quicker, and who does not feel within him a high exultation and pride, in the past glory and future prospects of his country. With these prospects are associated—if we are only wise, true, and faithful, if we shun sectional dissension—all that man can conceive of the progression of the American people. And the only danger which threatens those high prospects is that miserable spirit which, disregarding the obligations of honor, makes war upon the Constitution; which induces men to assume powers they do not possess, trampling as well upon the great principles which lie at the foundation of the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the Union, as upon the honorable obligations which were

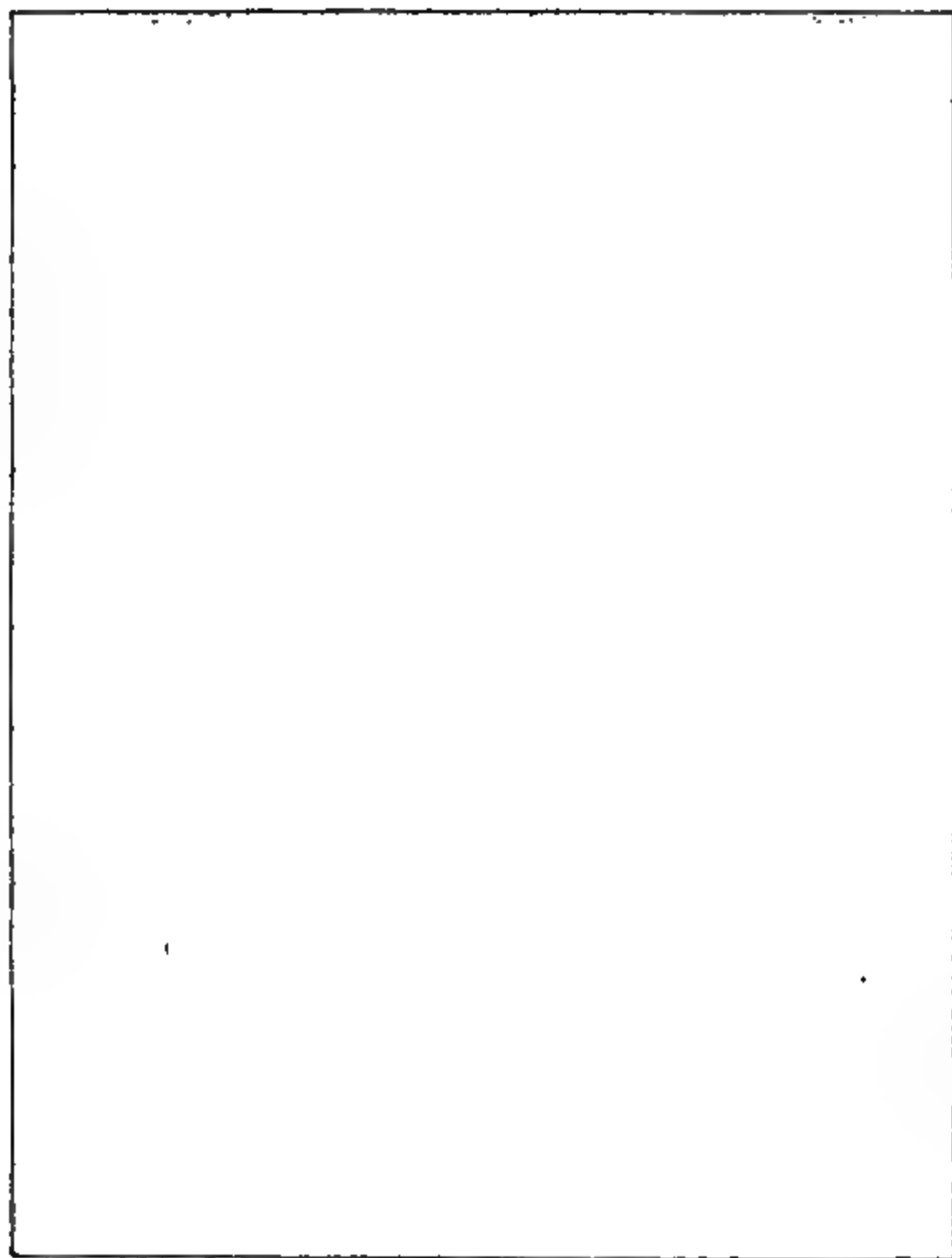
fixed upon them by their fathers. They with internecine strife would sacrifice themselves and their brethren to a spirit which is a disgrace to our common country. With these views, it will not be surprising, to those who most differ from me, that I feel an ardent desire for the success of this State-rights Democracy ; that, convinced as I am of the ill consequences of the described heresies unless they be corrected ; of the evils upon which they would precipitate the country unless they are restrained—I say, none need be surprised if, prompted by such aspirations, and impressed by such forebodings as now open themselves before me, I have spoken freely, yielding to motives I would suppress and cannot avoid. I have often, elsewhere than in the State of which I am a citizen, spoken in favor of that party which alone is national, in which alone lies the hope of preserving the Constitution and the perpetuation of the Government and of the blessings which it was ordained and established to secure.

“ My friends, my brethren, my countrymen, I thank you for the patient attention you have given me. It is the first time it has ever befallen me to address an audience here. It will probably be the last. Residing in a remote section of the country, with private as well as public duties to occupy the whole of my time,

it would only be for a very hurried visit, or under some such necessity for a restoration to health as brought me here this season, that I could ever expect to remain long among you, or in any portion of the Union than the State of which I am a citizen.

“ I have stayed long enough to feel that generous hospitality which evinces itself to-night, which has evinced itself in Boston since I have been here, and showed itself in every town and village in New England where I have gone. I have stayed here, too, long enough to learn that, though not represented in Congress, there is a large mass of as true Democrats as are to be found in any portion of the Union within the limits of New England. Their purposes, their construction of the Constitution, their hopes for the future, their respect for the past, is the same as that which exists among my beloved brethren in Mississippi.

“ In the hour of apprehension I shall turn back to my observations here, in this consecrated hall, where men so early devoted themselves to liberty and community independence, and I shall endeavor to impress upon others, who know you only as you are represented in the two Houses of Congress, how true and how many are the hearts that beat for constitutional liberty, and faithfully respect



JEFFERSON DAVIS, JR.



every clause and guarantee which the Constitution contains, for any and every portion of the Constitution."

His speech was received with enthusiasm, and Mr. Davis came home pleased with the reception accorded him, but far more happy over the hope of a peaceable adjustment of the sectional dissonance, the acerbity of which existed not in his heart, but in theirs who were the aggressors.

As soon as our boy was better we bade farewell to Boston, and though "The tender grace of a day that is dead, can never come back to me," we often looked through the mists of the long ago, and heartily rendered thanks to those who were actively kind to us when we were in dire need.

In Boston we were joined by Colonel Samuel Cooper and Professor Pearce, and we all went to New York together. At breakfast Professor Bache came in, flushed with the triumph of the cable-layers. He brought a copy of Queen Victoria's cable-gram, "Peace on earth and good-will toward men." Then began a series of questionings. Professor Pearce believed it had really been sent and received. Professor Bache said he was inclined to think it must be true; a hoax would cause so much indignation that the perpetrator would not be safe. Governor Sey-

mour thought it was not a real despatch. Mr. Davis felt almost sure that the cable could not be insulated so as to transmit the fluid so far. The pressure of the sea would break the cable. In other words, it was an impossibility ; but the great feat had been accomplished, though the belief in it percolated very slowly through the minds of the people of that day. Now our conversation with the other side of the world is only limited by the length of our purses, or the extent of our needs. Diseases may be treated from day to day by cable, and consols rise to meet the fluctuations in the Bourse. Both dominate the gold-room in New York on the same day. A note of war sounded in the morning, comes trumpeting over the cable, and cotton, the victim of all earthly disasters, trembles and retreats without parleying.

We returned in safety to Washington, and Mr. Davis, "after the first frost," which is the period our people believe makes one safe from chills and fevers, returned to Mississippi to straighten out plantation matters and give an account of his stewardship to his constituents.

When their "Colonel" came to them, they had no sharp criticism to pass upon him, asked questions for information, but never for censure. No man ever had more generous,



consistent, and admiring constituents. When he left them it was only a "lengthening chain," and no disruption. If he had not been their first choice, he did not wish to serve them ; if they disagreed with him, they wondered if they were not mistaken, and argued the point with the "Colonel" with equal frankness and faith. If at any time he had found out that a considerable body of them disapproved of his course, he would have relieved them of the necessity to censure by resigning their free gift. In this time such relations seem impossible, and the account of such a state of politics appears now arcadian. Perhaps it would always have been as at present, had the population of Mississippi not consisted mainly of the planters, who were a law unto themselves and felt themselves to be the conservators of the public peace and weal. This condition developed the feudal or patriarchal character that was fostered by the segregated, independent households, and they wisely ruled over their laborers, their families, and themselves, and cultivated in peace and plenty the wide tracts of land owned by them.

A vote could not have been bought or sold in that day, and the man who would have offered a bribe would have fared ill at their hands.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

THIRTY-SIXTH CONGRESS—SQUATTER SOVEREIGNTY, 1859-61.

WHILE the best men of the two parties were endeavoring to calm the extremists and give time for their better judgment and feelings to assert themselves, a most unfortunate incident occurred which still further divided the two sections.

A pestilent, forceful man, who had courage with an insane prejudice to urge him, added to total disregard of the rights of any except the colored race, organized a conspiracy, an account of which, written by President Buchanan,\* is subjoined.

“ John Brown was a man violent, lawless, and fanatical. Amid the troubles in Kansas he had distinguished himself, both by word and by deed, for boldness and cruelty. His ruling passion was to become the instrument of abolishing slavery by the strong hand, throughout the slave-holding States. With him this amounted almost to insanity. Notwithstanding all this, he was so secret in his

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\* Mr. Buchanan's Administration, p. 62.

purposes that he had scarcely any confidants. This appears in a striking manner from the testimony taken before the Senate Committee. Several abolitionists had contributed money to him in aid of the anti-slavery cause generally, but he had not communicated to them for what particular purpose this was to be employed. He had long meditated an irruption in Virginia, to excite and to aid a rising of the slaves against their masters; and for this he had prepared. He had purchased two hundred Sharp's carbines, two hundred revolver pistols, and about one thousand pikes, with which to arm the slaves. These arms he had collected and deposited in the vicinity of Harper's Ferry. When the plot was ripe for execution, a little before midnight on Sunday evening, October 16, 1859, he, with sixteen white and five negro confederates, rushed across the Potomac to Harper's Ferry, and there seized the armory, arsenal, and rifle factory belonging to the United States. When the inhabitants awoke in the morning they found, greatly to their terror and surprise, that these places, with the town itself, were all in the possession of John Brown's force. It would be a waste of time to detail the history of this raid. Suffice it to say that, on Tuesday morning, eighteenth, the whole band, with the ex-

ception of two who had escaped, were either killed or captured. Among the latter was John Brown himself, badly wounded. In the mean time, however, his party had murdered five individuals, four of them unarmed citizens, and had wounded nine others. It is proper to observe that John Brown, after all his efforts, received no support from the slaves in the neighborhood. The news of this attack on Harper's Ferry spread rapidly over the country. All were at first ignorant of the strength of the force, and public rumor had greatly exaggerated it. The President immediately sent a detachment of marines to the spot, by which John Brown and his party were captured in the engine-house, where they had fled for shelter and defence. Large numbers of volunteers from Virginia and Maryland had also hastened to the scene of action. John Brown and several of his party were afterward tried before the appropriate judicial authorities in Virginia, and were convicted and executed.

“ In the already excited condition of public feeling throughout the South, this raid of John Brown made a deeper impression on the Southern mind against the Union than all former events. Considered merely as the isolated act of a desperate fanatic, it would have had no lasting effect. It was the enthusiastic

and permanent approbation of the object of his expedition by the abolitionists of the North which spread alarm and apprehension throughout the South. We are told by Fowler, in his 'Sectional Controversy,' that on the day of Brown's execution bells were tolled in many places, cannon fired, and prayers offered up for him as if he were a martyr; he was placed in the same category with Paul and Silas, for whom prayers were made by the church, and churches were draped in mourning. Nor were these honors to his memory a mere transient burst of feeling. The Republican party have ever since honored him as a saint or a martyr in a cause which they deemed so holy. According to them, while his body moulders in the dust, his spirit is still 'marching on' in the van to accomplish his bloody purposes. Even blasphemy, which it would be improper to repeat, has been employed to consecrate his memory."

The members of the Senate and House who were implicated in any degree in giving John Brown "aid and comfort" were interrogated by a committee of each house in a secret examination, and Mr. Seward was proved to have subscribed money; but he asserted that he had no idea that Brown intended to use it for such purposes as his raid unveiled.

In the height of this turmoil, while peace and war trembled in the balance, Hinton Helper, a man formerly from North Carolina, wrote and published a book called "The Impending Crisis," of which Mr. Buchanan said, "No book could be better calculated for the purpose of intensifying the mutual hatred between North and South. This book, in the first place, proposes to abolish slavery in the slave-holding States by exciting a revolution among those called the 'poor whites' against their rich slave-holding neighbors. The plan urged upon the non-slave-holding citizens of the South was, omitting atrocious minor details :

1st. "Thorough organization and independent political action on the part of the non-slave-holding whites of the South."

2d. "Ineligibility of pro-slavery slaveholders. Never another vote to anyone who advocates the retention and perpetuation of human slavery."

3d. "No co-operation with pro-slavery politicians ; no fellowship with them in religion ; no affiliation with them in society."

4th. "No patronage to pro-slavery merchants ; no guestship in slave-waiting hotels ; no fees to pro-slavery lawyers ; no employment to pro-slavery physicians ; no audience to pro-slavery parsons."

5th. "No more hiring of slaves by non-slave-holders."

6th. "Abrupt discontinuance of subscription to pro-slavery newspapers."

7th. "The greatest possible encouragement to free white labor. . . ."

To this sweeping "bull of excommunication" recommended to the Free Soil party, Helper added a vulgar address to the South; he wrote:

"But, sirs, slave-holders, chevaliers, and lords of the lash, we are unwilling to allow you to cheat the negroes out of all the rights and claims to which, as human beings, they are most sacredly entitled. . . ."

"What are you going to do about it? Something dreadful, of course. Perhaps you will dissolve the Union again. Do it, if you dare. Our motto, and we would have you understand it, is, 'The abolition of slavery and the perpetuation of the American Union.' If, by any means, you do succeed in your treasonable attempts to take the South out of the Union to-day, we will bring her back to-morrow; if she goes away with you, she will return without you."

"Do not mistake the meaning of the last clause of the last sentence. We could elucidate it so thoroughly that no intelligent person could fail to comprehend it; but, for rea-

sons which may hereafter appear, we forego the task."

Incredible as it may seem, this book was bought in large numbers and issued by the Northern senators and members of Congress as campaign documents. They signed a paper recommending the disgraceful fanfaronade as a true exposition of the issue. All these acts aggravated the irritation of the Southern men, and society in Washington began to be divided by sectional lines.

The Thirty-sixth Congress opened December 7, 1859. The political outlook was gloomy, and threatening storms were lowering everywhere. The whole country was greatly excited, and armed factions were carrying on a guerilla warfare on the plains of Kansas—the factions there being divided on sectional lines. They were the shadows of the coming war.

The minds of men, both in and out of Congress, had become fixed, with feverish interest, on this petty but tragically significant conflict in the Territory. Its import was too plain to be misconstrued. It was the herald of early coming disaster to the Union. Yet, notwithstanding the impending peril, the advocates of abolition neither faltered nor moderated their unconstitutional demands and policy. On the contrary they became more aggressive.



They ignored the decision of the Supreme Court, that the Federal Government possesses no power to violate the rights of property within Territories, because these "are united with the rights of persons, and placed on the same ground by the fifth amendment of the Constitution, which provides that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, and the powers over persons and property of which we speak, are not only not granted to Congress, but are in express terms denied, and it is forbidden to exercise them."

The abolitionists affiliated with Judge Douglas's party, who maintained that at any time the people present in the Territory, voting, had a right by a majority to forbid the entrance of slave property into the Territory; while the Supreme Court decided that the only time at which this division could be a legal one, was when made by the legally authorized votes for a convention to form a State. Judge Douglas's theory was called squatter sovereignty, and was a heresy so eminently dangerous to the rights of the States to occupy without a sacrifice of their property any territory to be acquired in future, that it met with stubborn resistance from a large portion of the Southern Democracy and conservative Northern Democrats.

It may not be out of place here to give figures which reveal the steady march of the war waged, within the Union, against slavery. Although public opinion on that question was practically solidified in the Eastern States, and wholly so in the South, it had been hitherto only formative in the Middle and Western States.

About this time Mr. Seward came forward into greater prominence, and became the most noted leader of the Republican party. Mr. Buchanan said: "He was much more of a politician than a statesman, without strong convictions; he understood the art of preparing in his closet and uttering before the public, antithetical sentences, well calculated both to inflame the ardor of his anti-slavery friends and to exasperate his pro-slavery opponents. . . . He thus aroused passions, probably without so intending, which it was beyond his power to control."

New York, with two Republicans in the Senate, had sent to the House twenty-one Republicans out of a delegation of thirty-three. Pennsylvania, intent on getting rid of her fealty to the Democratic party as quickly as she could, had chosen one Republican for the Senate, and ten out of twenty-five representatives—these latter to be augmented in the Thirty-sixth Congress to twenty. Ohio

had furnished an anti-slavery majority to the House, while Indiana and Illinois were, each, within one of a Republican majority. Missouri elected one Republican (Francis P. Blair, Jr.); Michigan, Iowa, and Wisconsin contributed unbroken delegations against slavery.

The results of the contests for the Speakership in these two Congresses were significant.

In the Thirty-fifth Congress, James L. Orr, Democrat, of South Carolina, had been elected on a single ballot, by 128 votes against 84 for Galusha A. Grow, the Republican candidate.

In the Thirty-sixth Congress, at the opening of the first session, the roll stood, 109 Republicans to 101 Democrats—a gain ominous for those who had hoped against hope to obtain, within the Union, the justice guaranteed by the Constitution. The Republicans, however, could not boast of a decided majority, the balance of power being held by a few members still adhering to the virtually extinct Whig and American (or “Know-nothing”) organizations, and a smaller number whose position was doubtful or irregular. The contest for Speaker was memorable both for its length and the fierce passions it aroused. John Sherman, of Ohio, carried his party

with him—except three votes—through more than seven weeks, from the second to the fortieth ballot. On January 30th, finding his election impossible, he withdrew. His withdrawal set free the dead-lock. Two days afterward, in the forty-fourth ballot—William Pennington, a Republican of New Jersey, accepted as a compromise candidate, was elected by a majority of one vote.

Besides the Kansas question, another cause had contributed to the rapid growth of the Republican party. This was, as Mr. Davis has elsewhere explained, “the dissension among the Democrats occasioned by the introduction of the doctrine called by its inventors and advocates ‘popular sovereignty,’ or ‘non-intervention,’ but more generally and more accurately known as ‘squatter sovereignty.’” Its origin is generally attributed to General Cass, who is supposed to have suggested it in some general expressions of his celebrated ‘Nicholson letter,’ written in December, 1847. On the 16th and 17th of May, 1860, it became necessary for me, in a debate in the Senate, to review that letter of Mr. Cass. From my remarks then made the following extract is taken :

“ ‘The Senator (Mr. Douglas) might have remembered, if he had chosen to recollect so unimportant a thing, that I once had to ex-

plain to him, ten years ago, the fact that I repudiated the doctrine of that letter at the time it was published, and that the Democracy of Mississippi had well-nigh crucified me for the construction which I placed upon it. There were men mean enough to suspect that the construction I gave to the Nicholson letter was prompted by the confidence and affection I felt for General Taylor. At a subsequent period, however, Mr. Cass thoroughly reviewed it. He uttered (for him) very harsh language against all who had doubted the true construction of his letter, and he construed it just as I had done during the canvass of 1848. It remains only to add that I supported Mr. Cass, not because of the doctrine of the Nicholson letter, but in despite of it; because I believed that a Democratic President, with a Democratic Cabinet and Democratic counsellors in the two Houses of Congress, and he as honest a man as I believed Mr. Cass to be, would be a safer reliance than his opponent, who personally possessed my confidence as much as any man living, but who was of, and must draw his advisers from, a party the tenets of which I believed to be opposed to the interests of the country, as they were to all my political convictions.

“ ‘ I little thought, at that time, that my ad-

vocacy of Mr. Cass upon such grounds as these, or his support by the State of which I am a citizen, would at any future day be quoted as an endorsement of the opinions contained in the Nicholson letter, as those opinions were afterward defined. But it is not only upon this letter, but equally upon the resolutions of the Convention as constructive of that letter that the Senator rested his argument.

“ ‘ But this letter entered into the canvass ; there was a doubt about its construction, there were men who asserted that they had positive authority for saying that it meant that the people of a Territory could only exclude slavery when the Territory should form a constitution and be admitted as a State. This doubt continued to hang over the construction, and it was that doubt alone which secured Mr. Cass the vote of Mississippi. If the true construction had been certainly known, he would have had no chance to get it.’

“ Whatever meaning the generally discreet and conservative statesman, Mr. Cass, may have intended to convey, it is not at all probable that he foresaw the extent to which the suggestions would be carried and the consequences that would result from it.”

Of Mr. Douglas and his claim to the doctrine of “squatter sovereignty,” Mr. Davis says :

“ In the organization of a government for California, in 1850, the theory was more distinctly advanced, but it was not until after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, in 1854, that it was fully developed, under the plastic and constructive genius of the Honorable Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois. The leading part which that distinguished Senator had borne in the authorship and advocacy of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, which affirmed the right of the people of the Territories ‘ to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States,’ had aroused against him a violent storm of denunciation in the State which he represented and other Northern States. He met it very manfully in some respects, defended his action resolutely, but in so doing was led to make such concessions of principle, and to attach such an interpretation to the bill, as would have rendered it practically nugatory—a thing to keep the promise of peace to the ear and break it to the hope.”

Reviewing the power of Congress under the Constitution, he adds :

“ The Constitution expressly confers upon Congress the power to admit new States into the Union, and also to ‘ dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting

the territory or other property belonging to the United States.' Under these grants of power, the uniform practice of the Government had been for Congress to lay off and divide the common territory by convenient boundaries for the formation of future States; to provide executive, legislative, and judicial departments of government for such territories during their temporary and provisional period of pupilage; to delegate to these governments such authority as might be expedient—subject always to the supervision and controlling government of the Congress. Finally, at the proper time, and on the attainment by the territory of sufficient strength and population for self-government, to receive it into the Union on a footing of entire equality with the original States—sovereign and self-governing. All this is no more inconsistent with the true principles of 'popular sovereignty,' properly understood, than the temporary subjection of a minor to parental control is inconsistent with the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence, or the exceptional discipline of a man-of-war or a military post with the principles of republican freedom.

“ The usual process of transition from a territorial condition to that of a State was, in the first place, by an act of Congress authorizing the inhabitants to elect representatives to a



convention to form a State Constitution, which was then submitted to Congress for approval and ratification. On such ratification the supervisory control of Congress was withdrawn, and the new State authorized to assume its sovereignty, and the inhabitants of the Territory became citizens of a State. In the cases of Tennessee in 1796, and Arkansas and Michigan in 1826, the failure of the inhabitants to obtain an 'enabling act' of Congress, before organizing themselves, very nearly caused the rejection of their applications for admission as States, though they were eventually granted on the ground that the subsequent approval and consent of Congress could heal the prior irregularity. The entire control of Congress over the whole subject of territorial government had never been questioned in earlier times. Necessarily conjoined with the power of this protectorate, was of course the duty of exercising it for the safety of the persons and property of all citizens of the United States, permanently or temporarily resident in any part of the domain belonging to the States in common.

"Logically carried out, the new theory of 'popular sovereignty' would apply to the first adventurous pioneers settling in the wilderness before the organization of any Territorial government by Congress, as well as

afterward. If 'sovereignty' is inherent in a thousand or five thousand persons, there can be no valid ground for denying its existence in a dozen, as soon as they pass beyond the limits of State governments. The advocates of this novel doctrine, however, if rightly understood, generally disavowed any claim to its application prior to the organization of a Territorial government.

"The Territorial Legislatures, to which Congress delegated a portion of its power and duty to 'make all needful rules and regulations respecting the Territory,' were the mere agents of Congress, exercising an authority subject to Congressional supervision and control—an authority conferred only for the sake of convenience, and liable at any time to be revoked and annulled. Yet it is proposed to recognize in these provisional, subordinate, and temporary legislative bodies, a power not possessed by Congress itself. This is to claim that the creature is endowed with an authority not possessed by the creator, or that the stream has risen to an elevation above that of its source.

"Furthermore, in contending for a power in the Territorial Legislatures permanently to determine the fundamental, social, and political institutions of the Territory, and thereby virtually to prescribe those of the future

State, the advocates of 'popular sovereignty' were investing those dependent and subsidiary bodies with powers far above any exercised by the Legislatures of the fully organized and sovereign States. The authority of the State Legislatures is limited, both by the Federal Constitution and by the respective State constitutions from which it is derived. This latter limitation did not and could not exist in the Territories."

On February 2, 1860, Mr. Davis submitted a series of important resolutions, which were afterward slightly modified to read as follows:

" 1. *Resolved*; That, in the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the States adopting the same acted severally as free and independent sovereignties, delegating a portion of their powers to be exercised by the Federal Government, for the increased security of each against dangers, domestic as well as foreign; and that any intermeddling by any one or more States, or by a combination of their citizens, with the domestic institutions of the others, on any pretext whatever, political, moral, or religious, with the view to their disturbance or subversion, is in violation of the Constitution, insulting to the States so interfered with, endangers their domestic peace and tranquillity—objects for which the Con-

stitution is formed; and, by necessary consequence, tends to weaken and destroy the Union itself.

“ 2. *Resolved*, That negro slavery, as it exists in fifteen States of this Union, composes an important portion of their domestic institutions, inherited from our ancestors, and existing at the adoption of the Constitution, by which it is recognized as constituting an important element in the apportionment of powers among the States; and that no change of opinion or feeling on the part of the non-slave-holding States of the Union in relation to this institution can justify them or their citizens in open or covert attacks thereon, with a view to its overthrow; and that all such attacks are in manifest violation of the mutual and solemn pledge to protect and defend each other, given by the States respectively, on entering into the constitutional compact which formed the Union, and are a manifest breach of faith and a violation of the most solemn obligations.

“ 3. *Resolved*, That the Union of these States rests on the equality of rights and privileges among its members, and that it is especially the duty of the Senate, which represents the States in their sovereign capacity, to resist all attempts to discriminate either in relation to persons or property in the Terri-

tories, which are the common possessions of the United States, so as to give advantages to the citizens of one State which are not equally assured to those of every other State.

“4. *Resolved*, That neither Congress nor a Territorial Legislature, whether by direct legislation or legislation of an indirect and unfriendly character, possesses power to annul or impair the constitutional right of any citizen of the United States to take his slave property into the common Territories, and there hold and enjoy the same while the Territorial condition remains.

“ 5. *Resolved*, That if experience should at any time prove that the judiciary and executive authority do not possess means to insure adequate protection to constitutional rights in a Territory, and if the Territorial government shall fail or refuse to provide the necessary remedies for that purpose, it will be the duty of Congress to supply such deficiency.\*

“ 6. *Resolved*, That the inhabitants of a Territory of the United States, when they rightfully form a constitution to be admitted as a State into the Union, may then, for the first time, like the people of a State when forming a new constitution, decide for them-

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\* The words, “within the limits of its constitutional powers,” were subsequently added to this resolution, on the suggestion of Mr. Toombs, of Georgia, with the approval of the mover.

selves whether slavery, as a domestic institution, shall be maintained or prohibited within their jurisdiction; and shall be received into the Union with or without slavery, as their constitution may prescribe at the time of their admission.

“7. *Resolved*, That the provision of the Constitution for the rendition of fugitives from service or labor, ‘without the adoption of which the Union could not have been formed,’ and that the laws of 1793 and 1850, which were enacted to secure its execution, and the main features of which, being similar, bear the impress of nearly seventy years of sanction by the highest judicial authority, should be honestly and faithfully observed and maintained by all who enjoy the benefits of our compact of union; and that all acts of individuals or of State Legislature to defeat the purpose or nullify the requirements of that provision, and the laws made in pursuance of it, are hostile in character, subversive of the Constitution, and revolutionary in their effect.”

These resolutions led to a protracted and earnest debate. They were finally—Mr. Davis writes—adopted seriatim, on the 24th and 25th of May, by a decided majority of the Senate (varying from thirty-three to thirty-six yeas against from two to twenty-one

nays), the Democrats, both Northern and Southern, sustaining them unitedly, with the exception of one adverse vote (that of Mr. Pugh, of Ohio) on the fourth and sixth resolutions. The Republicans all voted against them or refrained from voting at all, except that Mr. Tenyck, of New Jersey, voted for the fifth and seventh of the series. Mr. Douglas, the leader if not the author of 'popular sovereignty,' was absent on account of illness, and there were a few other absentees."

While the resolutions were pending, Mr. Davis made every effort personally, and through others supposed to have more influence with Mr. Douglas, to induce him to sanction, or initiate some policy which would reconcile the two extremes upon this question, as the following letter, kindly furnished me by the Hon. Cabell R. Breckenridge, will attest :

" May 15, 1854.

" HON. J. C. BRECKENRIDGE.

" DEAR SIR : Mr. Stephens, of Michigan, remarked to me this morning that all the Northern Democrats would vote for Douglas's original substitute. I remarked that it was preferable, and he repeated that every Democrat of the North would support it. As the principal difficulty with the Southern men has arisen from the modifications the bill un-

derwent in the Senate after the substitute was offered, I thought it might be important and write that you may see the Hon. Mr. S., or take such course as you may deem best.

“Very truly yours,

“JEFFERSON DAVIS.”



## CHAPTER XLIV.

### CHARLESTON CONVENTION, 1860.

IN 1790, the sections were so nearly equal in numbers that they felt able to protect their own interests by parliamentary resistance, but in 1860 the admission of many States in which the prohibition of slave property had been the principal clause requisite to their acceptance, had changed the face of things for the South. The large excess of territory belonging to the Southern States was decreased by portions ceded by Louisiana, Florida, and Texas. Virginia ceded the Northwest territory to the United States. The Missouri Compromise surrendered all the new territory except Missouri north of thirty-six degrees and thirty seconds. The compromise of 1850 gave up the northern part of Texas, and the North took, by vote of a majority, all the territories acquired by Mexico. A determined and preconcerted stand was made by the North and West against the admission of any Territory in the benefits of which the South had any participation, except by the sacrifice of its right of property in slaves.

Mr. Davis, in 1886, wrote on this subject to a friend :

“ In 1860, Mr. Douglas, as chairman of the Senate Committee on Territories, introduced a number of bills which were referred to a select committee, of which Mr. Clay was chairman. These bills, with little modification, were united and reported as what is familiarly known as the ‘ Omnibus Bill.’ Your compliment to Mr. Clay on page eleven is, I believe, just in so far as his influence secured the passage of the bills, the result which was otherwise doubtful. I opposed the measure with all the power I possessed, and after my return to Mississippi, advised the protest and such action as the united South might take to secure *then* a settlement which would guarantee our constitutional rights, and in many speeches stated the belief that if the occasion was allowed to pass, any future assertion of our rights must be written in blood.

“ The lease it gave was, as you say, of short duration, because it was a ‘ compromise ’ only in name. It had no element of permanent pacification. The refusal to extend the line of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes to the Pacific Ocean, with all its political significance, was, in 1850, a denial of the obligation to recognize the existence of a compact between the North and South for a

division upon that line ; therefore it was illogically argued in 1854, by Mr. Douglas, chairman of the Committee on Territories, and others, that the political line of 36°, 30' had been obliterated by the legislation of 1850, and that the bill introduced by him declared it to be the true intent and meaning of said bill neither to legislate slavery into the Territory, nor exclude it therefrom, but to leave it to the people, when they came to form a State government, to decide that question for themselves.

“ This was the measure about which, as I wrote to you, the two committees of Congress came to me to obtain for them an interview with President Pierce on Sunday. You do great injustice to the President when you assign to him a selfish motive for his concurrence with the measure when presented to him. With entire confidence I say the President knew nothing of the measure until it was explained to him in that Sunday interview. Then he gave his assent, because it was in conformity with his opinion of the constitutional power of Congress, and because the Missouri Compromise was regarded as virtually repealed by the refusal to recognize its binding force in the division of recently acquired territory in 1850. To this extent, and this *only*, was it an Administration meas-

ure, and the committee left the President with the ability to say he concurred with the propriety of the measure.

“ President Pierce was a man of the nicest sense of honor, incapable either for his own advancement, or for that of another, of entering into any indirect scheme. That he was a strict constructionist of the Constitution was sufficiently shown in 1837-38, when Mr. Calhoun’s resolutions were under discussion in the Senate.

“ Then, not considering the prejudice which might exist among the people of the State he represented, he stood more firmly on the ground of your creed and mine than many who represented Southern States.

“ The often quoted expression of the President, that he ‘ knew no North, no South, no East, no West,’ was uniformly exemplified, and in the division of the officers for the new territories, like those for the new regiments, his policy was in accordance with that famous declaration.

“ I think, therefore, that you are mistaken in the view you take of that subject. If the repeal of the Missouri Compromise line occurred in 1850, then the unprecedented change which you notice as resulting in the legislation of 1854, must be construed as in the first case, as being injurious to the South,

and in the second case, as stripping the case to exclusiveness.

“The first conclusion involves the question of date, and by which section the repeal was made.

“Second, the motive was certainly higher and more worthy of those who were restoring constitutional right against usurpation and wrong, committed in 1820.

“Third, to contend for a principle, a right attaching to equality in the Union, was a duty apart from any political benefit, and above even the consideration of interest to be affected by establishing a dangerous precedent.

“Messrs. Douglas and Atchison are both dead. So far as I know and believe, they never were in such relation to each other as would have caused Douglas to ask Atchison's help in preparing the bill, and I think the whole discussion shows that Douglas originated the bill, and for a year or two vaunted himself on its paternity. As you are aware, I was not in the Senate between 1853-57.”

In 1835 the first bugle call was heard to summon the crusaders against slavery. An English emissary led the reprobated party then, and they met with a sharp reception at the hands of the worthy citizens of the North. These men believed their cause to be that of

freedom and humanity, and their strength consisted in the fact that they were zealots and willing to die in defence of their faith. Sincerity always commands a certain respectful following. This movement offered a tempting weapon to the eager hands stretched out for political power and office; but designing politicians joined the standard of "Free Soil" without either the faith or the enthusiasm of the abolitionists, and kept up a factious opposition to everything that tended to benefit the Southern people or to extend their borders.

The view of the sources of power over a Territory, held by Mr. Davis and those who acted with him, that "The climate and will of the community should determine their institutions when they should meet to form a constitution, and as a State be admitted into the Union; and that no legislation by Congress should be permitted to interfere with the free exercise of that will when so expressed," was but the announcement of the fact clearly recognized in the Constitution, that sovereignty resided alone in the States, and that the General Government had only delegated powers. The Southern men also held that the ordinances of the Congress of Confederation of 1787, prohibiting involuntary servitude in all the Northwestern Territory, were not binding upon, or precedents for the

Congress of the United States, the right of which had been defined and permanently settled by a later instrument—the Constitution of the Union. “The assumption of power would avail nothing as to the Congress under the Constitution, the power of which is expressly limited to what had been delegated.”

Mr. Buchanan, in his “Administration,” attributed the sudden culmination of the dispute over the property in the Territories between the North and the South to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise of 1820; but this opinion is hardly tenable in view of the fact that the Missouri Compromise had been rendered and declared “inoperative and void” by the refusal of the North to apply it to the territory acquired from Mexico south of the geographical line established by that instrument. Whenever the effort was made to claim our rights under it, the Wilmot proviso was pressed upon the two houses and defeated all efforts at a peaceful adjustment. The fact that it was inoperative was declared, but no new act was consummated by the vote of Southern men to repeal the Missouri Compromise bill. They took this means to arrive at some understanding of what were the admitted rights of the South over the Territories in which both parties were acknowledged to be the joint owners, and also from a manly

determination to settle the dispute in their time, instead of transmitting it to posterity. They were willing to make concessions and waive rights, in order to put an end to internal strife, though denying the authority of Congress to interfere with their State affairs, or legislate on the rights inherent to them.

When the Missouri Compromise was repealed, if the right in the property of the several territories reverted to the original owners, Kansas and Nebraska would, by the absence of compromises, revert to the States in common, and thus be left open to the whole country, whose property they were, to decide by actual occupation whether its system of labor should be by freemen or by slaves.

While the two sections were thus hotly engaged in Congress, a Territorial government was organized in a regular manner and the Territories applied for admission, but the anti-slavery men established their headquarters at Lawrence, and brought in squatters by the thousands, elected another so-called Legislature at Topeka by these votes, and asked to be recognized as the legal government, alleging fraud on the part of the regularly elected Territorial body.

This lawless condition of things had caused the administration of Mr. Pierce to send out an officer of the army, who was believed to



be sturdily honest, to report on the true state of affairs in Kansas. Strict orders were given to the officers stationed there to insist upon impartial justice between the settlers from the two sections.

Secretary Davis also appointed an officer of high moral qualities to command the troops, a man of strong free soil proclivities, frankly announced, whose courage, honor, and sincerity were never doubted. He went to his honored grave as he had lived, with the esteem of all who knew him and the love of many — Colonel Edwin V. Sumner, of the United States Army.

When Mr. Buchanan came into office he recognized the Lecompton Legislature, having satisfied himself that it was the legally elected body.

There was an election for a State convention held on September 4th, which adjourned on November 7th, after ordering an election to be held on December 21, 1857, when the vote should be taken on the sole issue of free or slave labor. The ballots were endorsed "Constitution without slavery, and Constitution with slavery;" but the advocates of the Topeka Legislature and Constitution as a party again failed to vote, though a considerable portion availed themselves of the opportunity. The result was 6,226 votes for sla-

very, 596 against it. The constitution thus adopted provided for an election on the first Monday of January, 1858, for governor, lieutenant-governor, secretary of State, State treasurer, and members of the Legislature, and also a member of Congress. A large majority of the anti-slavery men seeing their error voted for these officers, and thus reversed the majority of the pro-slavery men and placed the State in the hands of the anti-slavery men.

This was the condition of Kansas when Mr. Davis returned to the floor of the Senate, and the sectional excitement was kept up until the admission of Kansas as a free State on January 29, 1861.\*

“And now,” wrote Mr. Davis, “the Northern indignation was aroused by the absurd accusation that the South had destroyed ‘that sacred instrument, the compromise of 1820.’ For the fratricide which dyed the virgin soil of Kansas with the blood of those who should have stood shoulder to shoulder in subduing the wilderness; for the frauds which corrupted the ballot-box, and made the name of election a misnomer, let the authors of ‘Squatter Sovereignty’ and the fomenters of sectional hatred answer to the

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\* For a fuller statement refer to the *Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, by Jefferson Davis.

posterity, for whose peace and happiness the Fathers formed the Federal compact.

“ In these scenes of strife were trained the incendiaries who afterward invaded Virginia under the leadership of John Brown, and at this time germinated the sentiments which led men of high position to sustain with their money this murderous incursion into the South.”

In reviewing this same period, Mr. Buchanan very pertinently inquires: “ But even admitting slavery to be a sin, have the adherents of John Brown never reflected that the attempt by one people to pass beyond their jurisdiction, and to extirpate by force of arms whatever they may deem sinful among another people, would involve the nations of the earth in perpetual hostilities? We Christians are thoroughly convinced that Mahomet was a false prophet--shall we, therefore, make war upon the Turkish Empire to destroy Islamism? If we would preserve the peace of the world and avoid much greater evils than we desire to destroy, we must act upon the wise principles of international law, and leave each people to decide domestic questions for themselves.”

On April 23d, the National Democratic Convention was held in Charleston, S. C., to nominate their candidate for President.

There was a wide divergence of opinion on the subject of admitting slavery into the new Territories. Mr. Stephen Douglas was the leader of the party of "squatter sovereignty," and to his standard came the Northern, Southern, and Western men who opposed the extension of slavery. The old organization composed of the strict constructionists of the Constitution, sometimes called "the old line Democrats," stood in solid phalanx ready to insist upon the equal rights of the South under the Constitution, and the men of the South generally stood firmly upon the decisions of the Supreme Court, and notably upon the Dred Scott decision, which placed slave property on exactly the same basis with that in lands, houses, and all other property. This decision was rendered by the venerable Chief Justice Taney, whose stainless ermine will never grace a nobler or more irreproachable judge, or one more worthy to sit in the most august body in the civilized world.

In this convention, after balloting for several days, the first formally defined sectional line was made manifest.

The majority report resolved that it was the duty of the Federal Government to protect all citizens in their rights of property and person in the Territories, and it was the duty of the Government to admit the Territory, when the

government should be lawfully organized, whether slavery should be permitted or abolished.

The minority report recognized the differences of opinion between the two wings of the party, and resolved to abide by the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States upon questions of constitutional law. They thus ignored the decisions of the Supreme Court previously made and promulgated upon this question, and promised to abide by some future decision. Those who looked at the animus of the minority saw they merely declared their dissonance with the majority, and stood ready to annul the opinion of the judiciary by one stratagem or another.

The South wanted a distinct expression of opinion and a pledge that the decisions of the court already promulgated should be accepted as final. There was no regular rule observed in the vote. Some States voted as units, others voted by individuals, and by a parliamentary juggle the individual votes of Pennsylvania made of the minority a majority. The cotton States saw the inexpediency of voting that in future the Democrats would abide by the decisions of the Supreme Court, for that was to acknowledge that the decisions of that court already announced were not final. They

therefore refused to vote at all, as did the old line Democrats, and the resolution was lost. The Cincinnati platform was not satisfactory to the Southern States, as they wanted the sectional matter settled, and felt their strength would not increase with procrastination. They therefore withdrew from this political shibboleth. A vote to observe the two-thirds rule destroyed the hopes of Mr. Douglas's friends, but they were irreconcilable, for with them it was aut Douglas aut Nullus.

The seceding delegates did not return, though had they been willing to do so, their right to take their seats had been referred to the Committee on Credentials, that their departure from the meeting vacated their seats. The majority of this committee insisted that the seats of the seceders were made vacant by their departure, and the minority were helpless to re-occupy them. The Douglas men had in several instances elected new men to the convention in lieu of the old ones, and as an Alabama free-soiler said, speaking to me of the convention, "It was pided, very much pided, and not much of anything."

New York coquetted a while with the South, and then went over to the majority. When the motion, without affirmation or guarantee of the rights of the Southern States in the Territories, was made to proceed

to an election for President, on April 30th, Louisiana, Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, and Texas withdrew in orderly procession; Tennessee, Kentucky, California, and Oregon followed. The president of the convention, General Caleb Cushing, then withdrew; a part of the Massachusetts delegation followed. Some few delegates from five of the eight seceding States remained, and the convention passed a resolution to recommend the Democratic party of the several States to supply the vacancies so created. On the strength of this resolution the remnant of the convention definitely refused admission or the right to vote to the seceding delegates.

Mr. Russell, of Virginia, a man as pure in heart as he was elevated in character, against whose patriotism and sincerity no allegation could ever have for a moment gained credence, arose, and in a speech that moved the hearts of the convention, used this remarkable expression. "Virginia stands in the midst of her sister States, in garments red with the blood of her children slain in the first outbreak of the irrepressible conflict. But, sir, not when her children fell at midnight beneath the weapons of the assassin, was her heart penetrated with so profound a grief as that which will wring it when she is obliged to choose between a separate destiny

with the South, and her common destiny with the entire Republic."

On the next day, May 1st, Georgia withdrew, followed by Tennessee and Kentucky. Virginia presented a test-resolution "that the citizens of the United States have an equal right to settle with their property in the Territories of the United States; and that under the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, which we recognize as the correct exposition of the Constitution of the United States, neither the rights of persons nor of property can be impaired by Congressional or Territorial legislation." When this reaffirmative resolution was submitted, it was smothered by cries of "not in order." Virginia then retired.

With astonishing inconsistency, half of the retiring delegates from Georgia, and half of the newly elected delegates were admitted; the same course was pursued toward those from Arkansas. The resolutions of the majority, except the nine relating to the Georgia delegation, were adopted in succession. When the minority report in favor of admitting the delegates came up, New York stepped to the front, and with her thirty-five votes made of the minority the majority.

The balloting proceeded, New York forced the two-thirds rule on the convention, but Mr.



Douglas's friends stood a solid phalanx around him, and would vote for no person or thing but him, and Squatter Sovereignty was his shibboleth. No conclusion could be reached, and the convention adjourned to meet at Baltimore on June 18th.

It was always a proud memory to Mr. Davis that Massachusetts gave him forty-nine votes, in unbroken succession, a testimonial of confidence and respect that cannot be lost or, like his name on Cabin John Bridge, be chiselled out of the work. Perhaps, had he stood among the citizens of other Northern States with his heart and hand open to them as he did in Massachusetts, his services might have been more potent to preserve peace. Years before the feud between the States had culminated in bitterness, I had a theory which perhaps, like Black Hawk's plan for abolishing slavery, was at least original if not practicable—that was to send the boys and girls of the North to schools in the South, and send our boys and girls to the North. The people of the two sections are not the same people, but are the complement of each other, and their extreme opinions would have thus been modified by the education of each in the other's sphere.

In Baltimore, June 18th, the convention met again with General Cushing again in the

chair. Everyone who could find standing room went from the adjacent cities. It put one in mind of the old Scotch song, "O little wot ye wha's coming." New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Ohio, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina—indeed, the anxious, thoughtful men from all the States poured in with propositions of pacification. They talked in groups of twos and threes in subdued tones, and listened to the proceedings of the convention as to their doom. In the galleries there were extraordinary scenes and by-plays. A Western lady was criticising most severely the South and all things Southern, when an old man, who was supposed to be a preacher, looked at her and said, in a persuasive tone, "Oh, lady, please don't do and talk so ugly, we are not as bad as you think."

The balloting continued until June 18th, when Mr. Howard introduced a resolution that the original delegates to Charleston should receive tickets of admission, but it was defeated by Mr. Douglas's friends. The new delegates elected to fill the vacant seats were admitted, though they represented a very small minority of their States; the motion was made to refer the seceding delegates' application for admission to the Committee on Credentials, from which, now that the Southern

element had been eliminated, there could be no hope of a favorable action.

That remnant of the Southern party was again divided by the candidacy of the Honorable John Bell, of Tennessee. "Spent by the fury of the shock," the different Democratic candidates each sustained a defeat, as was to have been expected, until the party united on the nomination and election of handsome, knightly Mr. Breckenridge, who told me immediately after it, "I trust I have the courage to lead a forlorn hope."

Thus Mr. Lincoln was finally elected over the divided household of our faith on issues antagonistic to our institutions. To the South he represented nothing but the embodiment of the enmity of his party. He was the candidate of a part only of the people of the United States, elected with the express understanding that he would rule in hostility over the minority, while ostensibly acting as the guardian of the whole country.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### MR. DAVIS WITHDRAWS FROM THE SENATE.

THE story of Mr. Davis's final withdrawal from the Senate of the United States shall be told in his own words :

“ Mississippi was the second State to withdraw from the Union, her ordinance of secession being adopted on January 9, 1861. She was quickly followed by Florida on the 10th, Alabama on the 11th, and, in the course of the same month, by Georgia on the 18th, and Louisiana on the 26th. The conventions of these States (together with that of South Carolina) agreed in designating Montgomery, Ala., as the place, and February 4th as the day, for the assembling of a Congress of the seceding States, to which each State convention, acting as the direct representative of the sovereignty of the people thereof, appointed delegates.

“ Telegraphic intelligence of the secession of Mississippi had reached Washington some considerable time before the fact was officially communicated to me. This official knowledge I considered it proper to await before

MR. AND MRS. JEFFERSON



taking formal leave of the Senate. My associates from Alabama and Florida concurred in this view. Accordingly, having received notification of the secession of these three States about the same time, on January 21st, Messrs. Yulee and Mallory, of Florida, Fitzpatrick and Clay, of Alabama, and myself, announced the withdrawal of the States from which we were respectively accredited, and took leave of the Senate at the same time.

“In the action which she then took, Mississippi certainly had no purpose to levy war against the United States, or any of them. As her senator, I endeavored plainly to state her position in the annexed remarks addressed to the Senate in taking leave of the body :

“ ‘ I rise, Mr. President, for the purpose of announcing to the Senate that I have satisfactory evidence that the State of Mississippi, by a solemn ordinance of her people, in convention assembled, has declared her separation from the United States. Under these circumstances, of course, my functions are terminated here. It has seemed to me proper, however, that I should appear in the Senate to announce that fact to my associates, and I will say but very little more. The occasion does not invite me to go into argument, and my physical condition would not permit me to

do so, if it were otherwise; and yet it seems to become me to say something on the part of the State I here represent on an occasion so solemn as this.

“ ‘ It is known to Senators who have served with me here that I have for many years advocated, as an essential attribute of State sovereignty, the right of a State to secede from the Union. Therefore, if I had not believed there was justifiable cause, if I had thought that Mississippi was acting without sufficient provocation, or without an existing necessity, I should still, under my theory of the government, because of my allegiance to the State of which I am a citizen, have been bound by her action. I, however, may be permitted to say that I do think she has justifiable cause, and I approve of her act. I conferred with her people before that act was taken, counselled them then that, if the state of things which they apprehended should exist when their convention met, they should take the action which they have now adopted.

“ ‘ I hope none who hear me will confound this expression of mine with the advocacy of the right of a State to remain in the Union, and to disregard its constitutional obligations by the nullification of the law. Such is not my theory. Nullification and secession, so often confounded, are, indeed, antagonistic



principles. Nullification is a remedy which it is sought to apply within the Union, and against the agent of the States. It is only to be justified when the agent has violated his constitutional obligations, and a State, assuming to judge for itself, denies the right of the agent thus to act, and appeals to the other States of the Union for a decision ; but, when the States themselves, and when the people of the States have so acted as to convince us that they will not regard our constitutional rights, then, and then for the first time, arises the doctrine of secession in its practical application.

“ ‘ A great man who now reposes with his fathers, and who has often been arraigned for a want of fealty to the Union, advocated the doctrine of nullification because it preserved the Union. It was because of his deep-seated attachment to the Union—his determination to find some remedy for existing ills short of a severance of the ties which bound South Carolina to the other States—that Mr. Calhoun advocated the doctrine of nullification, which he proclaimed to be peaceful, to be within the limits of State power, not to disturb the Union, but only to be a means of bringing the agent before the tribunal of the States for their judgment.

“ ‘ Secession belongs to a different class of

remedies. It is to be justified upon the basis that the States are sovereign. There was a time when none denied it. I hope the time may come again when a better comprehension of the theory of our Government, and the inalienable rights of the people of the States, will prevent anyone from denying that each State is a sovereign, and thus may reclaim the grants which it has made to any agent whomsoever.

“ ‘ I, therefore, say I concur in the action of the people of Mississippi, believing it to be necessary and proper, and should have been bound by their action if my belief had been otherwise ; and this brings me to the important point which I wish, on this last occasion, to present to the Senate. It is by this confounding of nullification and secession that the name of a great man whose ashes now mingle with his mother earth has been invoked to justify coercion against a seceded State. The phrase “ to execute the laws ” was an expression which General Jackson applied to the case of a State refusing to obey the laws while yet a member of the Union. That is not the case which is now presented. The laws are to be executed over the United States and upon the people of the United States. They have no relation to any foreign country. It is a perversion of terms—at least,

it is a great misapprehension of the case—which cites that expression for application to a State which has withdrawn from the Union. You may make war on a foreign state. If it be the purpose of gentlemen, they may make war against a State which has withdrawn from the Union; but there are no laws of the United States to be executed within the limits of a seceded State. A State finding herself in the condition in which Mississippi has judged *she* is—in which her safety requires that she should provide for the maintenance of her rights out of the Union—surrenders all the benefits (and they are known to be many), deprives herself of the advantages (and they are known to be great), severs all the ties of affection (and they are close and enduring) which have bound her to the Union; and thus divesting herself of every benefit—taking upon herself every burden—she claims to be exempt from any power to execute the laws of the United States within her limits.

“ ‘ I well remember an occasion when Massachusetts was arraigned before the bar of the Senate, and when the doctrine of coercion was rife, and to be applied against her, because of the rescue of a fugitive slave in Boston. My opinion then was the same that it is now. Not in a spirit of egotism, but to show that I am not influenced in my own

opinions because the case is my own, I refer to that time and that occasion as containing the opinion which I then entertained, and on which my present conduct is based. I then said that if Massachusetts—following her purpose through a stated line of conduct—chose to take the last step which separates her from the Union, it is her right to go, and I will neither vote one dollar nor one man to coerce her back; but I will say to her, God speed in memory of the kind associations which once existed between her and the other States.

“ ‘ It has been a conviction of pressing necessity, it has been a belief that we are to be deprived in the Union of the rights which our fathers bequeathed us, which has brought Mississippi to her present decision. She has heard proclaimed the theory that all men are created free and equal, and this made the basis of an attack upon her social institutions; and the sacred Declaration of Independence has been invoked to maintain the position of the equality of the races. That Declaration of Independence is to be construed by the circumstances and purposes for which it was made. The communities were declaring their independence; the people of those communities were asserting that no man was born, to use the language of Mr. Jefferson, booted and spurred, to ride over the rest of man-

kind ; that men were created equal, meaning the men of the political community ; that there was no divine right to rule ; that no man inherited the right to govern ; that there were no classes by which power and place descended to families ; but that all stations were equally within the grasp of each member of the body politic. These were the great principles they announced ; these were the purposes for which they made their declaration ; these were the ends to which their enunciation was directed. They have no reference to the slave ; else, how happened it that among the items of arraignment against George III. was that he endeavored to do just what the North has been endeavoring of late to do, to stir up insurrection among our slaves ? Had the Declaration announced that the negroes were free and equal, how was the prince to be arraigned for raising up insurrection among them ? And how was this to be enumerated among the high crimes which caused the colonies to sever their connection with the mother-country ? When our Constitution was formed, the same idea was rendered more palpable ; for there we find provision made for that very class of persons as property ; they were not put upon the footing of equality with white men, not even that of paupers and convicts ; but, so far as repre-

sentation was concerned, were discriminated against as a lower caste, only to be represented in the numerical proportion of three-fifths. So stands the compact which binds us together.

“ ‘ Then, Senators, we recur to the principles upon which our Government was founded; and when you deny them, and when you deny to us the right to withdraw from a Government which, thus perverted, threatens to be destructive to our rights, we but tread in the path of our fathers when we proclaim our independence and take the hazard. This is done, not in hostility to others, not to injure any section of the country, not even for our own pecuniary benefit, but from the high and solemn motive of defending and protecting the rights we inherited, and which it is our duty to transmit unshorn to our children.

“ ‘ I find in myself, perhaps, a type of the general feeling of my constituents toward yours. I am sure I feel no hostility toward you, Senators from the North. I am sure there is not one of you, whatever sharp discussion there may have been between us, to whom I cannot now say, in the presence of my God, I wish you well; and such, I am sure, is the feeling of the people whom I represent toward those whom you represent. I, therefore, feel that I but express their desire

when I say I hope and they hope for peaceable relations with you, though we must part. They may be mutually beneficial to us in the future, as they have been in the past, if you so will it. The reverse may bring disaster on every portion of the country, and if you will have it thus, we will invoke the God of our fathers, who delivered them from the power of the lion, to protect us from the ravages of the bear; and, thus putting our trust in God and in our firm hearts and strong arms, we will vindicate the right as best we may.

“ ‘ In the course of my service here, associated at different times with a great variety of Senators, I see now around me some with whom I have served long; there have been points of collision, but, whatever of offence there has been to me, I leave here. I carry with me no hostile remembrance. Whatever offence I have given which has not been redressed, or for which satisfaction has not been demanded, I have, Senators, in this hour of our parting, to offer you my apology for any pain which, in the heat of the discussion, I have inflicted. I go hence unencumbered by the remembrance of any injury received, and having discharged the duty of making the only reparation in my power for any injury offered.

“ ‘ Mr. President and Senators, having made the announcement which the occasion seemed to me to require, it only remains for me to bid you a final adieu.’ ”

Mr. Davis had been ill for more than a week, and our medical attendant thought him physically unable to make his farewell to the Senate. On the morning of the day he was to address his colleagues, the crowd began to move toward the Senate Chamber as early as seven o'clock. By nine there was hardly standing room within the galleries or in the passway behind the forum. The Senators' cloak-room was crowded to excess, and the bright faces of the ladies were assembled together like a mosaic of flowers in the doorway. The sofas and the passways were full, and ladies sat on the floor against the wall where they could not find seats. There brooded over this immense crowd a palpitating, expectant silence which was afterward remarked as very unusual. I sent a servant at seven o'clock, who, with a friend of hers, kept my seat and that of my companion, until the morning hour had expired. The gallery of the reporters was occupied by the Diplomatic Corps and their respective families.

Mr. Davis told me that he had great difficulty in reaching his seat, as the ladies, of course, could not be crowded, and each one



feared that the other would encroach on her scanty bit of room if an inch was yielded. Curiosity and the expectation of an intellectual feast seemed to be the prevailing feeling, and I, who had come from a sleepless night, all through the watches of which war and its attendants, famine and bloodshed had been predicted in despairing accents, looked on this festive crowd and wondered if they saw beyond the cold exterior of the orator—his deep depression, his desire for reconciliation, and his overweening love for the Union in whose cause he had bled, and to maintain which he was ready to sacrifice all but liberty and equality. We felt blood in the air, and mourned in secret over the severance of tender ties both of relationship and friendship; but a cloud covered all the rest, and our hearts were “exceeding sorrowful even unto death;” we could even guess at the end.

Mr. Davis, graceful, grave, and deliberate, amid profound silence, arose to address the Senate for the last time as a member of that body. Every eye was turned upon him, fearful of missing one word. He glanced over the Senate with the reluctant look, the dying cast on those upon whom they gaze for the last time. His voice was at first low and faltering, but soon it rang out melodiously clear, like a silver trumpet, to the extremest verge



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of the assembly. The music of his voice prevented the great volume of sound from jarring upon the ears of his audience. Unshed tears were in it, and a plea for peace permeated every tone. Every graceful gesture seemed to invite to brotherly love. His manner suggested that of one who parts from his family, because even death were better than estrangement.

He was listened to in profound silence, broken only by repeated applause, which his face revealed he deprecated before the Vice-President called the audience to order. The orator was too grief-stricken and too terribly in earnest to think of the impression he might create upon others. Had he been bending over his bleeding father, needlessly slain by his countrymen, he could not have been more pathetic or inconsolable.

Not his wife alone, but all who sat spell-bound before him knew how genuine was his grief, and entered into the spirit of his loving appeal.

With a plea for the indulgence of his colleagues whom, in debate he might, in all the past years of heated and strenuous endeavors, have offended, he offered the hand of fellowship to each of them who might be willing to accept it. There was scarcely a dry eye in the multitude as he took his seat

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with the words, "It only remains for me to bid you a final adieu."

Inexpressibly sad he left the chamber, with but faint hope; and that night I heard the often reiterated prayer, "May God have us in His holy keeping, and grant that before it is too late peaceful councils may prevail."

END OF VOLUME I.

